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Decks, Railings and Landscapes, Oh My!

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AFA Announces 2021 Winners

Case Study: Revamping Training in Light of COVID

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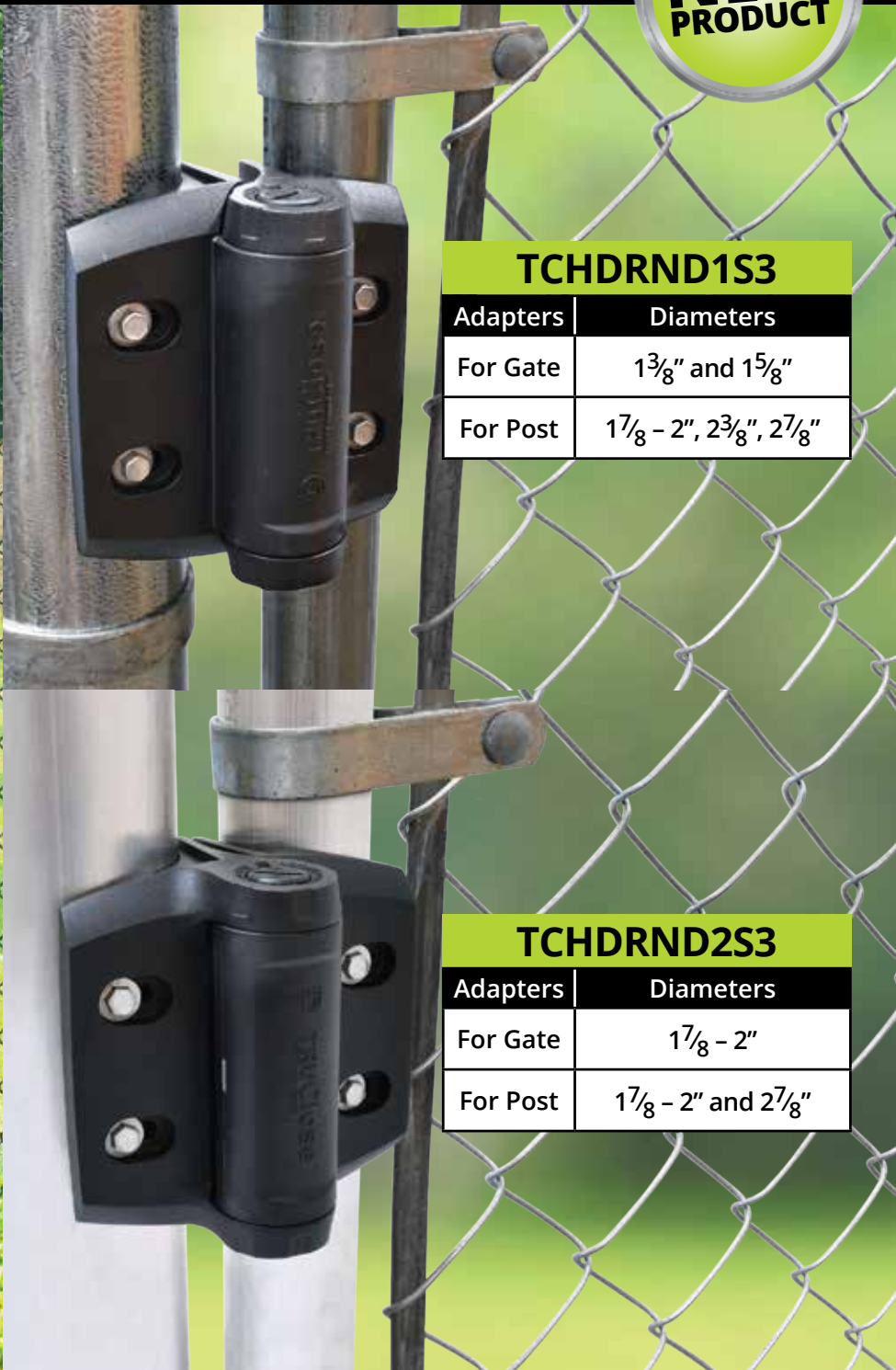
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For Post	1 7⁄8 - 2", 2 3⁄8", 2 7⁄8"

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Adapters	Diameters
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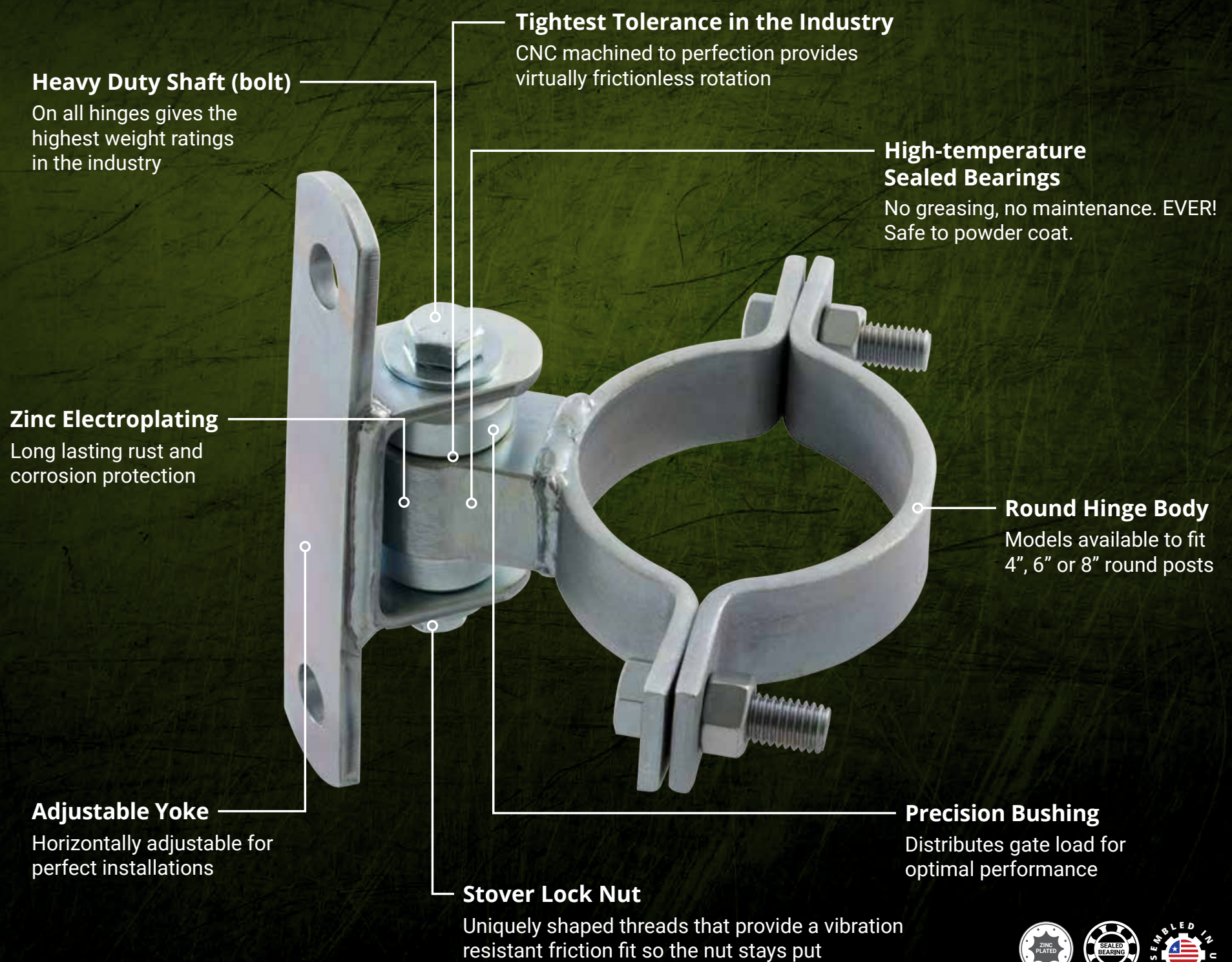


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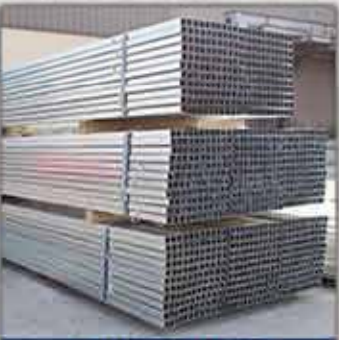
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Decks, Railings and Landscapes, Oh My!

Beautifully appealing and structurally engineered, decks railings and landscape fence can make outdoor spaces a relaxing oasis. While the aesthetics can't be beat, safety and sustainability are also key components of a quality job. Check out some of the new products available and tips for knowing which drilling product to use for getting the job done well.



Visualize the Possibilities with the new Trex® AR Deck and Railing Visualizer



Immersive App Enables Users to Preview Deck Designs in Actual Environments

In keeping with its brand mantra of “Engineering What’s Next In Outdoor Living®,” Trex Company, the world’s largest manufacturer of wood-alternative decking and railing, and leader in high-performance, low-maintenance outdoor living products, has introduced an innovative app that enables homeowners and contractors to bring deck design visions to life before they build. The new Trex® Augmented Reality (AR) Decking and Railing Visualizer tool allows users to explore design possibilities for their outdoor spaces by experimenting with shape, color and material combinations using the full suite of Trex® products

against the backdrop of their actual home environments.

Available for free via iTunes and Google Play stores, the fully immersive program offers an ideal starting point for anyone considering Trex products for their outdoor living area. With just the touch of a finger, users can design their dream space directly from their yard or living room utilizing realistic digital Trex product renderings. The app also allows users to specify and even purchase select products right from their mobile device.

“Today’s consumers increasingly look online as a first step in the planning and building process,” said Leslie Adkins, vice president of marketing for Trex. “This user-friendly resource enables them to bring their visions to life no matter where or when inspiration strikes. The high-definition renderings and advanced AR technology combine to deliver an unmatched experience that allows users to view accurate renderings against their own homes to quickly and easily see how Trex decking and railing can create the perfect foundation for their outdoor living space.”

Continued on p10



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The new Trex app affords users a panoramic view to experiment with the brand's extensive array of decking and selected railing pairings. The interactive and highly intuitive program also features helpful planning tools to help determine size/square footage and estimate material needs. It even generates a materials list with on-screen buttons to take users directly to the Shop Trex website (www.trex.com/shop) where they can order product samples. Consumers can email their selections to themselves, making for easy conversations with contractors when the time comes to build. Homeowners can also order product samples, find local Trex retailers and research builders in their area all within the application.

"Planning a new outdoor living space can be a major undertaking," added Adkins. "We strive to give homeowners the confidence to take the first steps toward building their dream deck and then provide all the tools they need along the way to effectively turn their dream into a reality."

The Trex AR Decking and Railing Visualizer expands the robust portfolio of deck planning tools available from Trex. Through a wealth of online resources, the brand provides ideas and support for homeowners throughout the entire process of creating a dream outdoor living space – from inspiration to installation:

DECK STARTER TOOL – Offering three ready-to-go deck designs, the Trex Deck Starter Tool makes it easy to customize any outdoor space. After selecting a design, the program guides the user through choosing a substructure, decking color and railing. Once completed, users can print out a materials list to help streamline the planning process.

DECKING & RAILING DUOS – To help simplify railing selection, the Trex Decking & Railing Duos guide provides a series of pre-selected railing looks to pair with some of the brand's most popular decking colors. The feature navigates users through the railing selection process, allows them



to explore the latest trends and offers customized, designer-curated pairings to help them identify the perfect combinations.

TREX DECK COST CALCULATOR – For a quick budget snapshot, the Trex Deck Cost Calculator offers homeowners valuable guidance in the early planning stages to help them make informed decisions. This easy-to-use resource estimates the material costs for a deck build based on size and the decking products being considered, ensuring homeowners that their dream deck remains within reach.

TREX DECK DESIGNER – Available for desktop, this intuitive software is the perfect next step after using the new Trex AR Visualizer. It allows homeowners to design a customized outdoor space using the robust portfolio of high-performance Trex outdoor living products. Starting by choosing deck dimensions, users can browse the full range of colors of Trex's three decking collections and mix and match railing options for virtually limitless design options and possibilities. Once users complete a look, the program automatically generates a list of components used in that design to make the purchase process easier. In addition, the homeowner can create an

account to save their projects, making idea sharing with family or potential contractors easy. It also estimates material costs and provides accurate renderings of the framing.

IDEAS PAGE – The Trex.com Ideas page is an online gallery of Trex projects that span regions, sizes, features and styles. Homeowners can peruse the images to find design inspiration and planning ideas.

DECK SAMPLE PROGRAM – When settling on a decking material proves a challenge, homeowners can take advantage of the online sample program on Trex.com that offers quick and easy home delivery of sample deck boards. With convenient delivery, homeowners can see firsthand how different colors and textures work with their home's architecture and décor.

In addition to these resources, homeowners can also find deck planning checklists, how-to installation videos, material calculators and more on the Trex website.

To download the new Trex AR Visualizer app, go to the iTunes and Google Play stores. For more information, visit www.Trex.com.

Wolf Home Products Announces Partnership with RailFX

Wolf Home Products, an innovator and leader in the building products industry, recently announced their partnership with RailFX®, provider of residential and commercial railing systems. In this partnership, Wolf Home Products will distribute RailFX cable rail and PFX 1000 aluminum railing through its network of dealers along the East Coast.

This strategic partnership follows the Wolf Home Products acquisition by PrimeSource Brands, with both Nationwide and Wolf Home Products in the PrimeSource portfolio of brands.

"Our partnership with RailFX represents another successful step in our growth strategy with PrimeSource Brands," said Craig Danielson, President and CEO at Wolf Home Products. "RailFX cable rail

and PFX 1000 aluminum railing complement our existing outdoor living products and add depth to our comprehensive portfolio."

Wolf Home Products carries a variety of low-maintenance outdoor living products including contractor preferred Wolf Serenity™ Decking. The addition of RailFX and PFX 1000 provide dealers and contractors a total package solution.

"As demand for outdoor living products is at an all-time high, we are thrilled to grow our offering of railing systems," said Mike Sessinger, Executive Vice President of Sales at Wolf Home Products. "Homeowners continue to gravitate toward durable, low-maintenance building products and Nationwide's

Continued on p14

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Hinges	\$\$ "... On back order? For how long?"	✓	INCLUDED
Closure Device	\$\$ "... We were shipped the wrong item!"	✓	INCLUDED
Wire Transfer	\$ "... Just a quick drive across town!"	✓	INCLUDED
Mesh Infill	\$\$ "... What do you mean it was damaged in shipping?"	✓	INCLUDED
Trim / Lockset	\$\$\$ "We only received half the order!"	✓	INCLUDED
INSTALLATION COSTS			
Gate / Jamb Install	\$\$\$ "Is this considered overtime?"		Minimal \$
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Roots and Branches – Dealing with this Potential Fence Hazard

Decks, Railings
and Landscapes,
Oh My!

Landscaping and fences go great together, but there are times when shrubs, trees and plants can be detrimental to a fence.

“Maintaining an aluminum fence doesn’t just mean keeping it clean and free from scratches and in good working order,” says Ronny Richker with GreatFence.Com, a leading aluminum picket fence supplier in the United States. “It also means maintaining the areas surrounding the fence, most notably trees and other landscaping elements that could become a hazard for the fence.”

Richker says roots and branches post the biggest threat to a fence, and he provides some advice for dealing with each and helping your landscape and your fence coexist:

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Roots can wreak havoc on outdoor projects. Any construction that involves digging in the ground could give way to some hidden roots from nearby trees. If these roots are simply cut through and discarded, it could cause a problem for the growth of the tree in the future. Furthermore, the post or other item you are placing in the ground could soon become tangled in new root growth, meaning you will be doing another renovation project sooner than you thought.

A general rule of thumb when planning out where to put a fence with trees nearby is to assume the roots go as far out as the tree limbs. This distance from trees might not work for your fence depending on the location of the perimeter of your yard. Thankfully, aluminum fencing panels only need to go into the ground at the posts. This means you can plan out your fence positioning better and hopefully have better luck with any roots that are already in place.

HIGH UP IN THE BRANCHES

Roots can be avoided and worked around, but what about branches? Tree branches can fall onto a fence, scratching it or even taking it down. Similarly,



branches can be low enough that they repeatedly scrape the fence’s surface, potentially leaving tiny scratches on the surface of the fence.

Thankfully, aluminum fence panels come with a heavy-duty powder coating that helps protect the fence from damage. What might leave tiny scratches on other metals or materials is usually not a concern for aluminum fencing due to this coating. Aluminum is also spectacular at standing up to extreme conditions, with small branches being no match for the strong metal. If you ever notice larger-sized branches that have fallen in the vicinity of your fence,

Continued on p15

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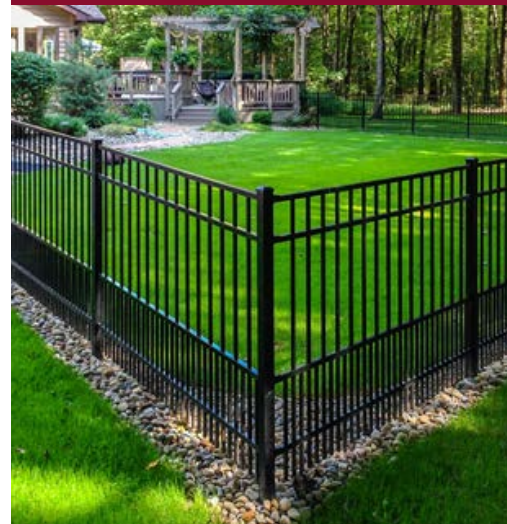
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cable and aluminum railing systems meet those needs.”

PFX 1000 features extruded aluminum construction and AAMA-2604 powder coating, which provides resistance to the elements while also ensuring color retention and beauty for years to come. RailFX cable rail is available in a variety of colors and is virtually maintenance free. Both railing systems feature contemporary style and on-trend design.

In addition to RailFX railing systems, Wolf Home Products also distributes a variety of outdoor living products including Wolf Serenity™ Decking and Porch, Wolf Perspective™ Decking, Fiberon Decking, Wolf Railing, Wolf Outdoor Lighting and Wolf Endurance™ outdoor cabinetry.

Learn more at wolffhomeproducts.com.

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it is worth taking a look at the fence's surface to ensure there are no scratches in the coating that need a touch up.

USING LANDSCAPING TO YOUR BENEFIT

Don't let the thought of falling branches and troublesome roots scare you away from having fences and trees coexist in your yard. Landscaping in general can help brighten up any outdoor space. Landscaping also helps a fence look more inviting, welcoming guests to your property with some greenery and an elegant fence structure.

"Some landscaping even helps your fence do more for you and your property," says Richker. "For example, having certain vines grown near your fence can help with privacy. Similarly, having tall trees or shrubs can help the yard feel more like a private oasis. And whatever you choose for your landscaping, when you choose an aluminum fence, you'll know you have a good, strong material that will stay in excellent condition.

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and Landscapes,
Oh My!



Simpson Strong-Tie Expands Suite of **Free Outdoor Living Solutions Applications** with **Fence Planner Software™**

Simpson Strong-Tie, a leader in engineered structural connectors and building solutions, has launched Fence Planner Software™ — a robust, easy-to-use solution for simplifying and streamlining the fence planning process, allowing users to create customized designs, compile a complete materials list, and build a strong, safe fence.

Fence Planner Software joins the popular Outdoor Living Solutions platform suite from Simpson Strong-Tie that now includes three software applications that make it easy to design safe, strong and beautiful structures for outdoor living in just minutes. Other apps include Deck Planner Software™ and Pergola Planner Software™, and all three Outdoor Living Solutions apps are free to homeowners, DIYers and other retail customers who want to design and build an outdoor living space that suits their style.

For builders and contractors, the software offers a way to expand value-added services, increase customer satisfaction, and line up more projects. Lumberyards, pro dealers and retailers can additionally participate in a licensing program offering three tiers of co-

branded or fully branded visibility within each app, increasing their own brand awareness and driving product sales.

“Homeowners are continuing to view their outdoor space as an extension of indoor living, and are investing into a wide range of outdoor structures,” says Simpson Strong-Tie software product manager of Outdoor Living Solutions, Kenny Redman. “The addition of Fence Planner to our suite of applications provides builders and contractors with easy, collaborative design tools and gives lumberyards and material dealers unique and streamlined solutions for powering product sales and boosting customer loyalty.”

Like the Deck Planner and Pergola Planner applications, Fence Planner Software is free and easy to use and features an in-

app tutorial to help select various fencing styles, materials, colors and connector hardware. Users can add 3D representations of structures, landscaping and hardscape features to their design and view the entire yard design in a realistic 2D or 3D environment. Once the design is complete, Fence Planner provides a complete project guide that includes a materials list to help users start building right away.

For more information on using Outdoor Living Solutions software from Simpson Strong-Tie to design a safe, strong, beautiful deck, pergola or fence in minutes, visit go.strongtie.com/outdoorliving or call (800) 999-5099.

Barrette Outdoor Living's Decorative Screen Panels Win “Best Outdoor Product”



Barrette Outdoor Living's Decorative Screen Panels (DSPs) won “Best Outdoor Product” at the 2022 NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS) held in Orlando, Florida.

The DSPs were selected from more than 200 entries submitted to the ninth annual Best of IBS™ Awards. Decided by a panel of 24 independent judges made up of attending reporters and building professionals, the awards were given to exhibitors within a product or line that showed the best combination of design, functionality and innovation, as well as usefulness to consumers and/or home builders.

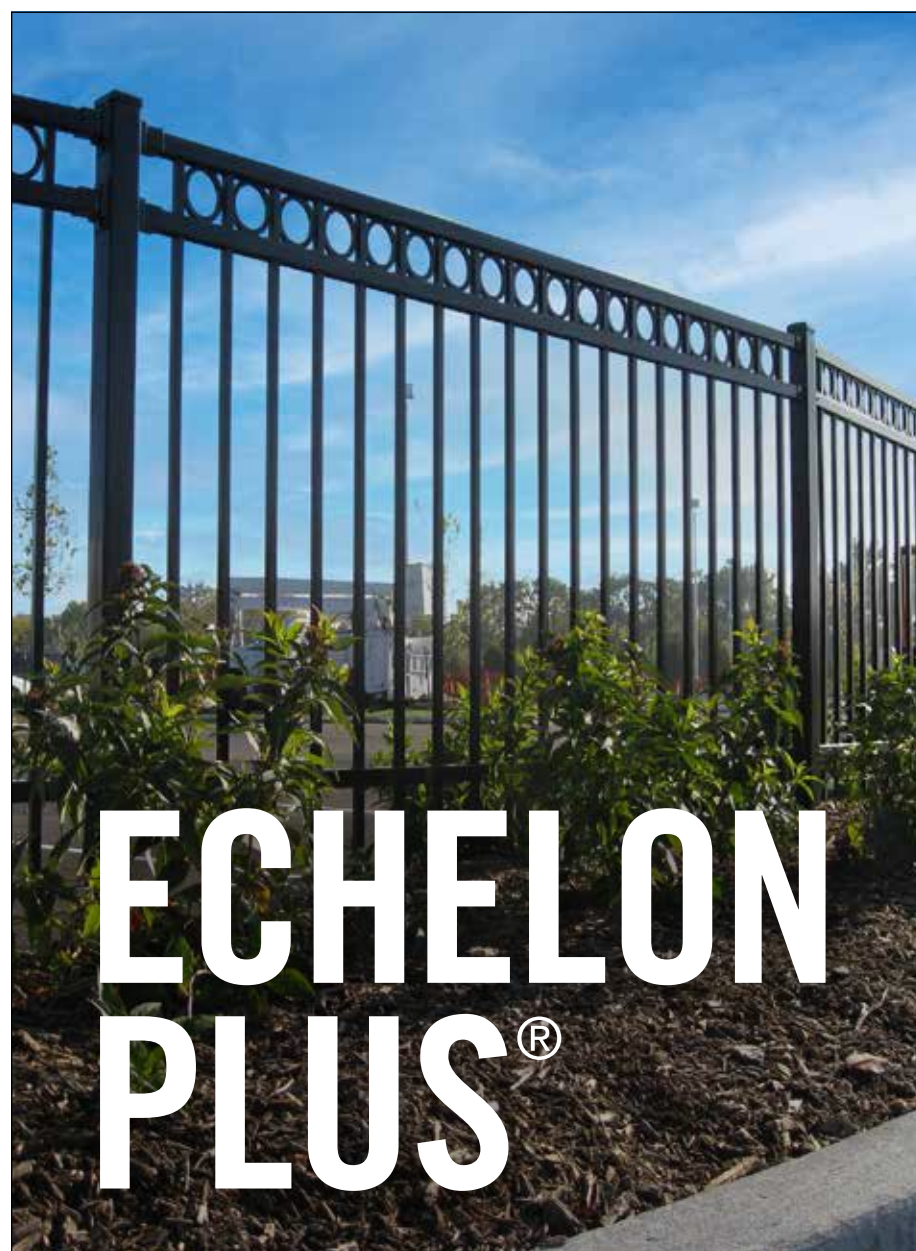
“The innovation and sustainability of the entries were much more evident in all aspects of products and services, but the biggest take away I saw from a judging standpoint was the efforts to create products that were easy to install for contractors and the ease of use for the end user,” says Pat Coveny, Best of IBS Awards judge and president and owner of Arch Construction Management.

DSPs have quickly become one of Barrette Outdoor Living's most versatile and in-demand products. Featuring a wide range of colors and patterns that range from modern to nature-inspired, DSPs provide an architectural element that can be used both outside and inside the home.

With uses ranging from traditional under deck coverage, to divider walls, to exterior or interior wall artwork, to privacy screening and room dividers, DSPs are highly adaptable. In 2022, the product will have an even greater visibility in the marketplace as Barrette Outdoor Living releases several products that will integrate the DSPs, including use with the company's fencing, railing, pergola and frame kits.

“To have a unique architectural element available in such a wide range of designs and colors that can be integrated with so many of our products is amazing,” says Jean desAutels, CEO of Barrette Outdoor Living. “Decorative Screen Panels are just one more way we offer homeowners solutions that make their outdoor vision come to life.”

Continued on p20



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In fencing, Barrette Outdoor Living Offers a contemporary vinyl privacy fence that features horizontal infill boards with DSP toppers as an alternative to traditional lattice top fencing. Additionally, the company's mixed material fencing offers the option of adding DSP toppers.

Barrette Outdoor Living also released railing kits that enable select DSPs to be used as customizable, code compliant infills that create a more on-trend alternative to traditional railing balusters. The DSP railing kits are for use with select RDI® Collection aluminum and vinyl railing products.

Further integrating cohesiveness of DSPs outside or inside the home, the company offers compatible aluminum frame kits that allow DSPs to slide in and stack up to three panels high to create a divider wall or decorative accent.

In addition, Barrette Outdoor Living's new DIY-friendly aluminum pergola was designed with the incorporation of DSPs in mind. The matte black pergola allows 2' x 4' DSPs to attach to the roof and optional side walls, giving homeowners the ability to add their own personal style while also providing shade and increasing privacy.

DSPs are available in two sizes, 2' x 4' and 3' x 6', and certain patterns feature dimensional texturization. Easy to install and low maintenance, DSPs can be painted and are easy to trim down, if necessary. DSPs are made from polypropylene, a durable material that is twice the thickness of traditional plastic lattice. Engineered to remain stable in extreme weather and temperature changes with minimal expansion and contraction, DSPs are scratch- and impact-resistant.

For more information, visit www.barretteoutdoorliving.com.



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It's Drilling Time

Choosing the proper earth drill and accessories for digging projects

Decks, Railings
and Landscapes,
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Mechanical drills feature high-speed auger rotations to quickly drill several narrow holes for a wide range of applications, such as for fitting fence posts and deck footings as well as planting decorative plants.



Hydraulic drills are a go-to drill for most challenging soils, including frozen ground and rocky soil, because of their rugged bodies and powerful torque.



Augers can be as narrow as 1 1/2 inches for applications like planting flowers and shrubs in a garden, and they can be as wide as 16 inches for large applications, such as foundation repair.

Earth drills are used for a variety of projects, from installing fences and signs to planting trees and shrubs, installing irrigation and even anchoring mobile homes and utility poles if the opportunity arises. All these projects have one common tie: each requires drilling a hole to complete the job. While drilling projects may appear to be the same on the surface, according to Joe Haynes, president of Little Beaver, it's really the soil type that makes the difference in choosing the equipment needed for maximum productivity on the jobsite.

When gathering the equipment for the jobsite, he says there are two options for engine-powered, one-man earth drills — hydraulic or mechanical. “They might look alike,” says Haynes, “but each post hole auger serves a unique purpose.”

Haynes offers some tips when considering earth augers at a rental center or for sale from a dealer.

WHEN TO USE HYDRAULIC DRILLS

Hydraulic drills are a go-to drill for most challenging soils, including frozen ground and rocky soil, because of their rugged bodies and powerful torque. Their precise operation at low speeds and high torque allows operators to drill clean, accurate holes, even in the most difficult applications. Additionally, hydraulic drills typically have a reverse position to safely remove the posthole auger if it becomes lodged under a rock or tree root.

Hydraulic drills are ideal for single-hole projects such as installing signs and planting trees because they're compatible with large-diameter augers, some as wide as 16 inches. Because of their high torque, these drills can also quickly anchor mobile homes as well as drive tent and utility stakes.

WHEN TO USE MECHANICAL DRILLS

Mechanical drills, like hydraulic drills, are compact, lightweight, and pack a powerful punch. For projects that need speed and precision, this drill is up to the task. These transmission-powered units feature high-speed auger rotations to quickly drill several narrow holes for a wide range of applications, such as for fitting fence posts and

deck footings as well as planting decorative plants. Coupled with an effective horizontal boring kit, they can be used for drilling under driveways or sidewalks for a variety of landscape needs.

CHOOSING AN AUGER

After selecting the earth drill, it's time to pick the auger that matches the required hole diameter. Augers can be as narrow as 1.5 inches for applications like planting flowers and shrubs in a garden, and they can be as wide as 16 inches for large applications, such as foundation repair. Look for snap-on augers to make changing out augers or attaching extensions quick and easy. Snap-on augers feature a spring-loaded snap button, which secures the auger to the drill head. This minimizes set-up and take-down times, as well as simplifies adding auger extensions. These extensions allow the operator to dig a few feet deeper without needing to purchase a longer auger.

SELECTING POINTS & BLADES

Along with the snap-on feature, contractors should look for augers that have replaceable points and blades. The standard blades and points are ideally suited for loamy soils or areas with few

rocks because of the cold-rolled steel and hard surfacing on the edges. When drilling in more dense soils, operators can select from a variety of sizes for the exclusive carbide blades, which allows the earth auger to cut hard clay and frozen ground into pieces. The blades are swapped out by using an adjustable wrench, which allows the drill to cut hard clay and frozen ground into pieces. When using the blades and points best suited to power through the soil, the augers can drill more than 100 holes in prime soil conditions before servicing is needed.

“With today's safe and powerful drill designs, contractors can tackle drilling projects with earth augers rather than shovels,” says Haynes. “Taking just a few minutes to learn the difference between drill types ensures maximum productivity on the current – and each future – jobsite.

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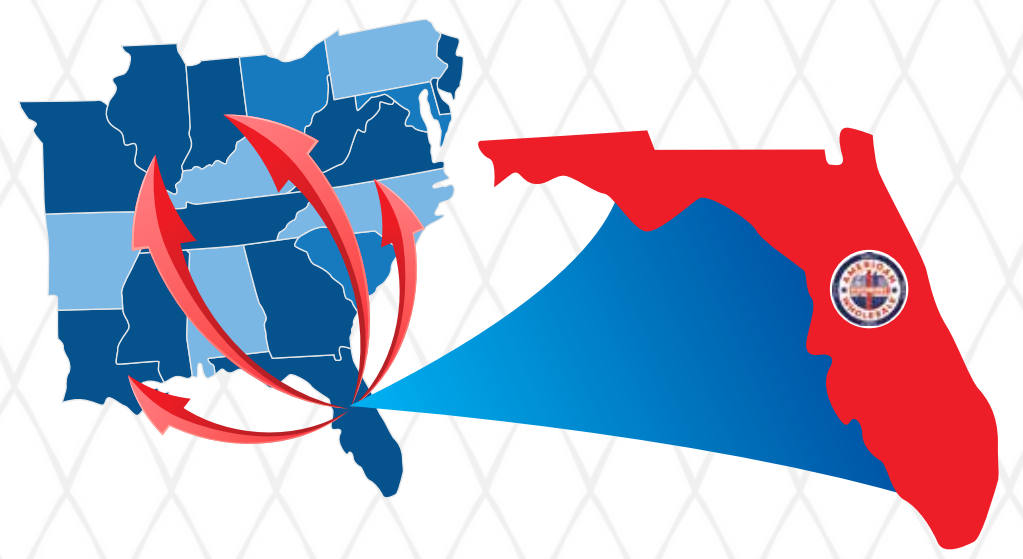
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Trex Highlights Outdoor Living Trends

Comfort, Convenience and Curves to Drive Design throughout 2022 and Beyond

Decks, Railings
and Landscapes,
Oh My!

Over the past two years, how we relate to, interact with and utilize everyday spaces has been reimagined. From where we work, to how we travel and shop, to the ways and frequency with which we use the indoor and outdoor spaces of our homes, much has changed. As consumers everywhere continue to re-evaluate where and how they spend their time, outdoor living has never had a brighter moment in the spotlight.

“While much of what a post-pandemic world will look like long-term remains to be seen, one thing is clear – outdoor living space is more essential than ever,” says Leslie Adkins, vice president of marketing for Trex Company, the world’s largest manufacturer of wood-alternative decking and railing, and a leader in high-performance, low-maintenance outdoor living products. “No matter where or how we live, there is continued demand for flexible outdoor areas where people can safely gather, appreciate nature, or simply enjoy a change of scenery. As we continue to navigate and adjust to new ways of living in the coming year, outdoor spaces will play a key role and will become even more important and meaningful.”

Each year, Trex captures input from consumers, contractors, retailers and industry insiders to compile its annual Outdoor Living Forecast. Here are the top trends and predictions Trex and industry experts have identified for outdoor living in the year ahead.



THE OUTDOOR DEN

Gone are the days of decks and patios that might be used to host a BBQ once or twice a year. Now, homeowners are seeking outdoor living areas where they can relax, watch their favorite shows, host a movie night with friends, play games and truly live every day.

As a result, deck designs are taking on new shapes and styles, from mid-century to modern. Outdoor dens and sunken outdoor living areas – inspired by the popular indoor trend from the 1960s – are expected to see a resurgence, and they’ll be outfitted with all the comforts and conveniences of the indoors, from upholstered furnishings and fully appointed kitchens to bars, big screen TVs, surround sound and more.

“The concept of the den originally gained popularity for its ability to bring everyone in the home together in a relaxed, comfortable setting,” notes Adkins. “Bringing this concept outdoors and allowing homeowners to enjoy that same comfort and connection is the very definition and goal of outdoor living.”

ACTIVITY ZONES

As our homes have become offices, classrooms, fitness facilities – you name it – space has become a precious commodity. So, it’s no surprise that nearly 60% of designers expect rooms that serve multiple functions – both indoors and out – to grow in popularity in 2022 and beyond. A great way to optimize the usability of an outdoor space is by dividing the space into multiple activity zones – spaces dedicated to various activities, from relaxing and dining, to areas for play, work and sanctuary.

A pergola is ideal for instantly framing and defining a space. A relatively easy addition to any deck or yard, pergolas create the look and feel of an outdoor room while adding a distinct architectural element. Of course, its main purpose is providing shade – essential for enhancing visibility of laptop screens and devices when working or learning from home, as well as offering cool relief on hot days.



Another way to integrate dimension into an outdoor space is with lattice. These stylish and versatile panels not only act as dividers for activity zones, but also minimize unsightly views.

And, don’t overlook the space beneath an elevated deck. Adding an under-deck drainage system, like Trex® RainEscape®, will not only protect a deck’s substructure from moisture damage, it will create dry space that can be used for storing seasonal items or be used as bonus living space fully outfitted with furnishings, lighting, ceiling fans and entertainment components. Because RainEscape installs above the joists, it allows homeowners to finish the space with any kind of decorative ceiling or soffit on the underside of the joists, to give the space a completely finished look.

PRIVACY, PLEASE



The past two years have left people craving not only connection, but also increased safety and serenity. Thus, privacy is expected to be one of the biggest outdoor living trends. With backyards being used for everything from meditation and exercise to rest and relaxation, homeowners are seeking ways to enhance seclusion.

Continued on p26

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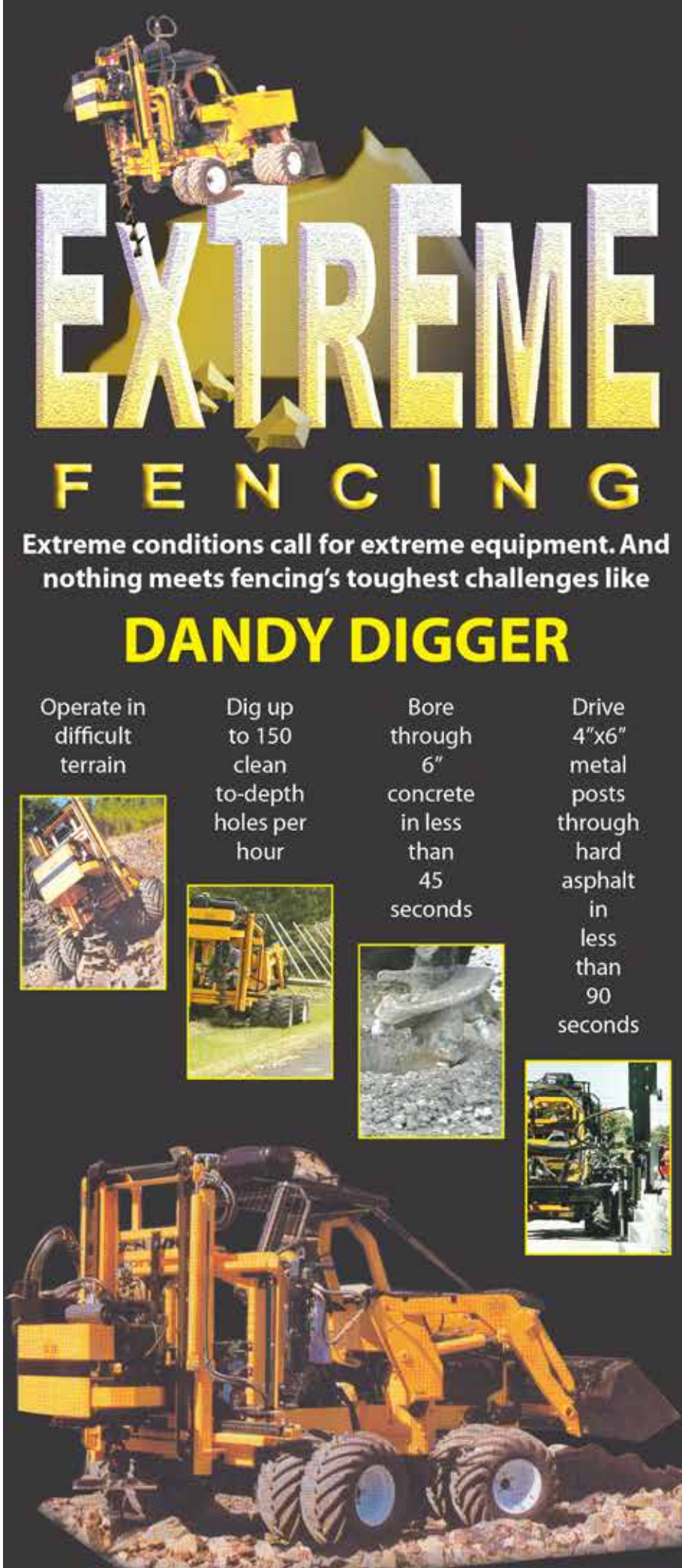
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With this in mind, Structureworks, the makers of Trex® Pergola™ and Trex® Lattice™ have created Trex® Privacy™, a new series of sturdy, stylish and low-maintenance aluminum privacy wall panels. Offered in both permanent and moveable options, these decorative panels are available in multiple patterns and colors to complement the aesthetic of any outdoor setting and are ideal for enhancing privacy around decks, patios and pools.

Another popular option is to incorporate privacy walls using cladding or leftover deck boards. An easy DIY project, these half walls create visual separation while adding a modern touch to any outdoor environment.

ECO-FRIENDLY AND EASY-TO-MAINTAIN

According to industry insiders, sustainability will be a cornerstone of home design and the products consumers are seeking, as homeowners assess the environmental impacts of their homes and purchasing decisions. Equally important are materials that are easy to maintain without requiring a lot of time, effort and expense.

Composite decking falls right in this sweet spot. Built on green values, Trex® composite decking is manufactured from 95% recycled materials and has a 56% lower carbon footprint than pressure-treated lumber. One of the largest recyclers of plastic film in North America, Trex repurposes approximately 850 million pounds of polyethylene plastic and reclaimed wood scrap each year in the making of its outdoor living products.

"Today's time-stretched consumers increasingly opt for lower-maintenance materials that deliver on performance and sustainability," Adkins explains. "Unlike wood, high-performance composites like Trex decking resist fading, staining, scratching and mold – and won't rot, warp, crack or splinter. No sanding, staining or painting is required, and food and drink spills wash off easily with just soap and water."

CURVE APPEAL

In a marked departure from the clean, streamlined looks of recent years, curves are making a comeback. Contractors already are reporting increased



demand for arched windows, doors and openings, along with curved footprints for porches, decks and walkways for landscaping.

“Curves add character to any setting and create a truly custom look,” Adkins says. “Trex outdoor living products give homeowners and contractors the freedom to design to every curve of their imagination.”

Many lines of Trex composite decking can be curved, along with Trex Signature Railing®. This line of durable, low-maintenance aluminum railing delivers sleek sophistication with a range of infill options, including traditional spindles, horizontal rods, mesh panels and glass inserts.

OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR KITCHENS

Homeowners everywhere have invested more in their kitchens than ever before – both indoors and out. As demand continues to soar for all things al fresco, from luxury grilling stations and elaborate bars to specialty features like pizza ovens, smokers, and refrigerated storage, demand for cabinetry is also on the rise.

The Trex® Outdoor Kitchens™ collection features a luxurious lineup of stainless steel cabinetry solutions in colors and styles options that allow designers and homeowners to create functional spaces that rival interior kitchens – all crafted to withstand and endure exposure to the elements.

“Outdoor living is no longer restricted to spring and summer, nor reserved for certain parts of the country,” adds Adkins.

“Thanks to new high-performance materials and innovative design approaches, people everywhere are transforming their outdoor spaces into multi-seasonal extensions of their homes.”

For more outdoor living ideas and inspiration, visit [Trex.com](https://www.trex.com).



Atlantis Rail Launches New Railing Visualizer

Atlantis Rail Systems is now able to give their customers a clear vision of their railing system

Cable railing manufacturer, Atlantis Rail Systems, has been looking for a more visual way to offer customers a tool for designing their own railing system. To do this effectively, they have announced the release of their new Railing Visualizer on their website. Chameleon Power empowers Atlantis Rail customers with the ability to build and create their desired railing system.

In just a few clicks, users can select their layout, choose from a variety of cable and glass railing systems, change the background scene, and switch the decking and railing colors. "The focus on outdoor living is at the forefront for many homeowners," says David Morgan, vice president of sales and marketing for Atlantis Rail Systems. "This tool helps our customers have a clear vision of the railing system they want, along with helping our estimators provide a more accurate quote with a shorter turnaround time."

This railing visualizer offers users a realistic view of Atlantis Rail products and assists with style and color selections. It provides a detailed look into railing style, color, post options, and more. All Atlantis railing systems are available for viewing, including different layouts and background scenes to give a real feel for how each system will look in different applications. Customers are even able to upload their own background to get a sense of how the railing system would fit their actual view.

"The visualizer not only benefits our sales and estimating team by giving them a more accurate picture of what our customers want, but it is also a sales tool for our authorized dealers to assist their customers in their railing and decking decisions," says Morgan. Besides, being able to update the railing styles that Atlantis Rail offers, this platform can also change the decking colors and post options that Atlantis Rail does not provide, which gives their dealers opportunities for cross-selling.

Atlantis Rail Systems is a leading manufacturer of premium stainless steel and aluminum cable and glass railing systems. Their systems are ideal for commercial and residential, indoor and outdoor applications and are available through a network of Authorized Dealers located throughout the United States and internationally.

To learn more about Atlantis Rail's visualizer, visit www.atlantisrail.com or call (508) 732-9191.

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Beautiful Boundaries: How Landscaping Improves Fence Lines

Decks, Railings
and Landscapes,
Oh My!

A fence can be both functional and beautiful on its own but adding the right landscaping can bring a new level of visual appeal to this hardscape feature of any property. Whether it's to soften typically straight edges of a chain link or tie ornamental metal design elements to other parts of a home's architecture, landscaping offers the best solution.

"Landscaping can camouflage or soften a plain fence and also highlight the design of a more contemporary or ornamental fence," says Chad Everage with Landscape Management Services in Lake Charles, Louisiana. "Properly planned landscaping against the backdrop of a well-installed fence adds a new, natural dimension to an outdoor space by making use of unused vertical space to add color and texture."

Everage says the style of the fence should guide the landscape design. "For a fence that is more functional rather than designed to be visually appealing, such as a chain link, or for an older fence that has seen better days, the property owner may want their landscape to hide the fence completely. For a white picket or an ornamental metal style, the goal may be to enhance the fence with landscaped beds and select placement of larger elements."

He adds that there are multiple factors to consider when planning fence line landscaping.

EXISTING LANDSCAPING

Everage says it's important to carefully evaluate the existing landscape. Hopefully, if a new fence was added, it supports the aesthetic of the home and outdoor space. The same applies for any new landscaping along the fence line. The goal should be for the newly landscaped areas to blend with any existing elements to provide the homeowner with an overall cohesive design.

SHRUBS AND HEDGES

The woody branch structure of a shrub, coupled with leaves of various sizes and colors, highlights and creates focal points along a fence row. There's no need to stick to one type of shrub, according to Everage. Planting two or three different types of shrubs, in layers, can help add a variety of textures and focal points – again, making better use of the vertical space. For greater diversity, choose shrubs that flower, fruit and change colors throughout the seasons. Taller shrubbery can work along with a fence

to increase the privacy for an outdoor space. Dense shrub choices, like boxwood, for example, can be used to create a hedge that defines and adds a natural border on one or both sides of a fence.



LANDSCAPE BEDS

The fence line is a great location for adding beds for flowers and other colorful bedding plants while keeping the rest of a yard open and uncluttered. Running these beds along the entire length of a fence, even if only a foot or two in depth, is a great visual enhancement for your yard. Don't feel confined to straight edges. Everage says curved beds add additional interest, as do climbing plants – if you have the type of fence that would allow for these types of plant vines to attach and thrive. This can also add an additional privacy barrier.



TREES

Everage says trees are one unique feature that should be given careful consideration both when installing a fence and when planning to include trees in any new landscaping along a fence. He says experienced fence contractors know the hazards existing trees pose for fences, and how to minimize or eliminate these impacts. Adding trees to landscaping can help create a classic, elegant look, as well as providing shade for the yard. When planting a new tree along a fence, Everage says choosing the right type of tree is critical. Narrow species that are relatively short are the best option. These should be planted far enough away – at least 5 feet – to allow for future growth that won't affect the fence. If you aren't sure what that future growth will entail, it's best to consult a landscape specialist.



HARDSCAPE ELEMENTS

The finishing touches to any landscape project are adding hardscape features. These can include lighting, water elements like a birdbath or a fountain, lattice for climbing plants, decorative stones, walking paths and more. Everage says this type of outdoor décor is really up to the preference of the homeowner, and should be chosen to blend with, as well as to highlight, all the landscape features that were already put in place – including the fence.

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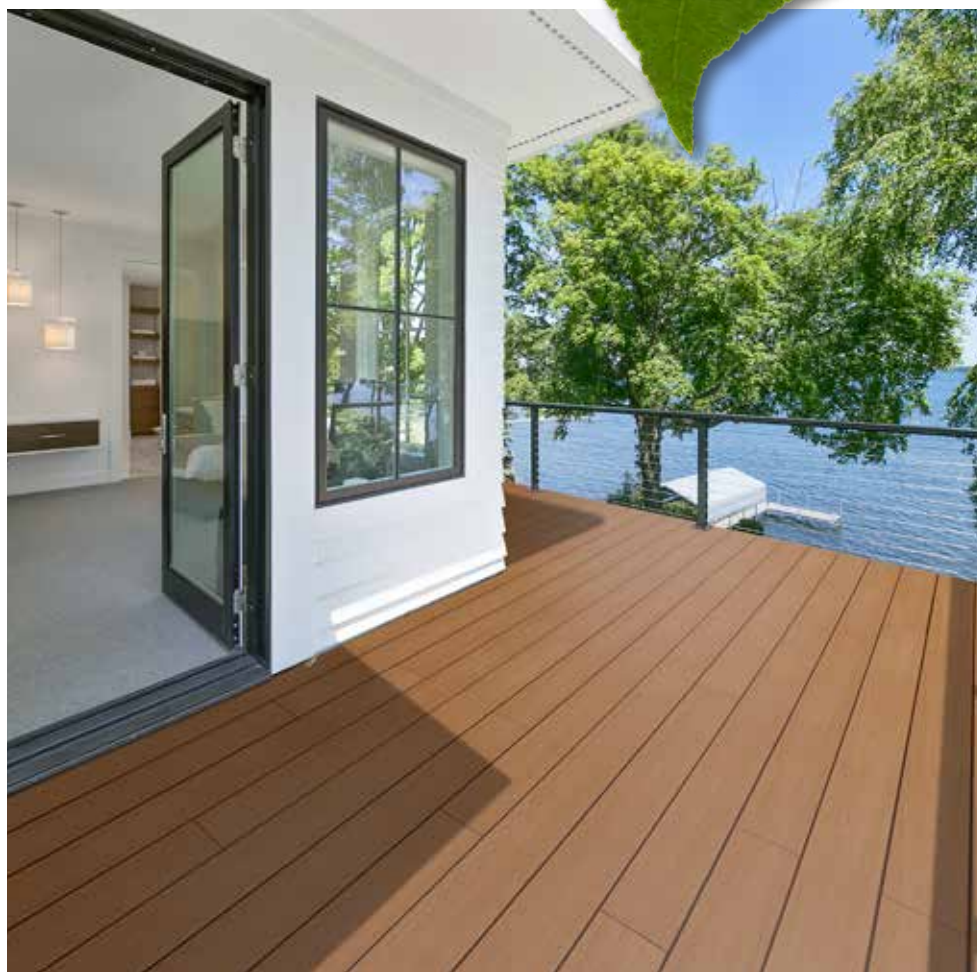
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CALI introduces a 12-foot composite decking planks from the TruOrganics collection. The planks are made using recycled materials, with the core comprised of 60% reclaimed wood fiber and 40% high-density plastics. This formula yields a stronger, more eco-friendly material that is uniquely protected against moisture, insects, rot and chemicals.

In addition to the fortified composition, the TruOrganics collection is guarded by a four-sided wrap shield for better protection from stains, scratches and the elements. This makes the planks easier to clean and keep looking like new. A 3G core ensures higher tensile strength and resiliency while making planks more lightweight and easier to work with. TruOrganics decking is backed by a 25-year residential warranty.

"Like all CALI products, we want to create the best user experience possible," says CALI President Doug Jackson. "With our decking line, that meant optimizing shipping with the new 12-foot planks and developing a material that can withstand the demands of a well-used, well-weathered outdoor space. It's meant to be lived on and enjoyed."

The planks feature a modern, matte finish, hardwood grain texturing and natural color options. Customers can order free samples to feel and test at home. Each color has matching rail and post kits to complete the project as well as fascia and solid square edge planks for trim and stairs.



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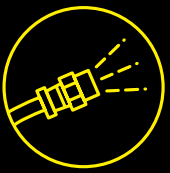


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Deckorators® Unveils New for 2022 Products for Outdoor Living

If 2020 was the year of the home, 2021 was the year of the deck. Increasingly, homeowners are opting to create their own oasis within property lines and making the most out of their outdoor spaces has meant a renewed vision of what they want and need from them.

Deckorators®, a leading brand of composite decking, deck railing and related products, has launched trendsetting new products that are perfect for creating personalized getaways at home.

Deckorators product introductions this year include:

- **Voyage Decking in Sedona featuring the line's signature vertical-grain variegation**
- **Voyage 11 ¼" Voyage Step Treads available in Tundra and Khaya**
- **3 ½" Picture Frame Board available in Dark Slate**
- **Low Voltage Recessed Lighting available in**

black or white trim

- **Aluminum Secondary Handrail in Bronze which is ADA compliant**

Whether homeowners are looking to work with a local deck builder on a deck project or tackle the job themselves, they can visit Deckorators.com to learn more, get started on a project, locate a contractor or find out where to buy these and other Deckorators products.

"Deckorators has always been about helping homeowners maximize their outdoor living space — and make it their very own," said Jase DeBoer, senior marketing manager of outdoor living for Deckorators. "Our promise to homeowners and building professionals alike is to provide reliable,

trend-setting products to create unique outdoor spaces. We're keeping that promise in 2022 with extraordinary new products that take the enjoyment of personalizing an outdoor space to a new level."

VOYAGE DECKING IN SEDONA BRINGS ADDED WARMTH TO ANY OUTDOOR SPACE.

The latest addition to the Deckorators Voyage line of mineral-based composite decking, Sedona is a warm brown tone suitable for a diverse array of outdoor projects. The on-trend, earth tone is inspired by the desert landscape and red-rock buttes of the Western U.S.

Decks, Railings
and Landscapes,
Oh My!



**11 1/4" VOYAGE STEP TREADS
FEATURES ENHANCED TRACTION
WHERE IT'S NEEDED MOST.**

Voyage Step Treads, available in Tundra and Khaya, feature enhanced traction with treads capped with durable polymer technology to add safety and style to one of the most important features of any deck. Available in 12 ft. lengths.

**3 1/2" DARK SLATE PICTURE
FRAME BOARD ADDS DEFINITION
AND STYLE.**

For a dramatic accent that truly defines a space, Deckorators offers the Dark Slate Picture Frame Board in a new 3 1/2" narrow width. Ideal for cocktail rails, accent picture frames and unique inlays. Not only does picture framing take your deck to the next level, but it completes the deck and makes the overall look clean and finished. Add as a breaker board or outline the perimeter on a deck to add a unique contrast to any outdoor space.

**LOW-VOLTAGE RECESSED
LIGHTING KEEPS EVERY STEP
ILLUMINATED.**

Let the barbecues and family parties extend throughout the evening hours with Deckorators low-voltage recessed lighting. New for 2022, these deck and riser lights are the perfect addition to any outdoor space. The easy to install program includes recessed deck lights, stair lights, transformers and a variety of features including Bluetooth connectivity.

**ALUMINUM SECONDARY
HANDRAIL IN BRONZE MARRIES
STYLE AND FUNCTION.**

Now available in Bronze, Deckorators' ADA-compliant secondary handrail is functional and highly versatile graspable handrail. The handrail components can be used to construct any ADA-compliant secondary railing to comply with building codes for safety and livability.

For more information on these and other new Deckorators products, visit www.Deckorators.com/2022.



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Clay Hamann

VICE PRESIDENT
SALES AND MARKETING

Honesty, commitment and hard work. That's how President Keith Armour and Vice President Clay Hamann sum up their approach. Keith began his career at Ameristar in 2008 in supply chain before taking over as president in 2019. Clay is relatively new to the fencing industry, but brings 33 years of sales and marketing experience to the table.

Headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Ameristar is one of three companies that encompass the Perimeter Security business segment, part of parent company ASSA ABLOY's vast network of opening solutions. Jerith Manufacturing in Pennsylvania and B&B Roadway Solutions in Alabama, along with Ameristar, make up the segment. Read on to learn what motivates these two to keep pushing the envelope.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR CAREER PATH?

Keith: I originally came from the chemical industry. Most of our chemicals were lawn care chemicals for the outdoor space, so no fencing background prior to Ameristar. Throughout my career, I worked primarily in the realm of supply chain, starting with Ryder Integrated (3PL) and moving on to Spectrum Brands (CPG) and now on to Ameristar. I worked in commodities at Spectrum, and started in supply chain/commodities with Ameristar.

Clay: My professional background was at Hilti, a premium supplier of construction products. My time there spanned 33 years in various roles primarily in sales, marketing and human resources in seven locations, mainly in the south and central US.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT YOUR JOB WITH AMERISTAR?

Keith: The people. The people at Ameristar, Jerith and B&B are great to work with every day. Having great people around you makes the job and work environment enjoyable.

Clay: The people at Ameristar and the customers we work with are true experts in our industry. They are highly motivated to work in spite of the daily challenges in our marketplace.

HOW WOULD YOU SUMMARIZE YOUR CAREER PHILOSOPHY?

Keith: Be direct, honest, hardworking, knowledgeable and caring. People work for a person, not a company. It's the same for customers; they buy from someone who is honest, upfront and fair.

Clay: I believe in customer transparency and accurate information. I continuously stress to the sales team during these volatile times, "Just give them the true story; no one has to always love it, but they need the truth as we know it to be."

HOW DO YOU HANDLE CHALLENGES IN THE WORKPLACE?

Keith: Always make sure you have all of the facts and have thoroughly investigated the cause and solution to the challenges. Don't assume you know the answer before you have heard the issue.

Clay: Challenges really need to be handled with balance. When an employee or customer perceives things in a certain way, it truly is their reality and their voice needs to be heard. Challenges are opportunities to improve our business voiced by our employees and our customers.

KEITH, WHAT TECHNIQUES HAVE YOU FOUND SUCCESSFUL FOR KEEPING OPERATIONS GOING SMOOTHLY?

Keith: Teamwork. Having everyone moving forward in the same direction and at the same pace is vital. If someone falters, stop, help them with the issue and move forward. It is that simple.

CLAY, HOW DO YOU STAY MOTIVATED IN SALES?

Clay: The interactions with our distribution partners and customers along with my sales team makes it quite easy to be motivated and enjoy my role. I am still learning about this industry, thus the interaction with the industry experts is amazing.

DO THE TWO OF YOU COLLABORATE ON STRATEGY OR WORK TOGETHER IN SOME WAY?

Keith: Clay and I both started our current roles at almost the exact time. We talk on almost a daily basis. I think we have both benefitted tremendously from the others' experience. Having that other person to bounce ideas off of is a critical piece. But, the most important piece is that all six of my direct reports work in tandem and as one. We make decisions together after discussing it as a group.

Clay: Since we both began our current roles three years ago, getting to know Keith and the team at Ameristar has been a great experience for me. If we're not traveling, then we meet on a very consistent basis to make sure we are strategically aligned to meet the needs of our internal and external customers.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT WORKING FOR SUCH A LARGE COMPANY?

Keith: Whether it's a large or small company, enjoy who you work with, where you are. We are fortunate to be surrounded by highly motivated people at Ameristar, Jerith as well as ASSA ABLOY.

Clay: The people at Ameristar are highly motivated and totally committed to the success of our customers which, of course, translates to the same success at Ameristar.

HOW MANY PEOPLE DO EACH OF YOU SUPERVISE?

Keith: I have six direct reports who are subject-matter experts in each business area.

Clay: I have a team in excess of 100 professional sales, marketing and training people across North America.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE STARTING OUT IN THE FENCING INDUSTRY?

Keith: Take time to listen and learn. It is a very inviting industry if you are willing to listen. I have yet to meet anyone who would not take the time to talk about the industry, its challenges or history. This is an industry that will continue to grow. I see many positive aspects for the industry in the future.

Clay: The people of this industry are generally very accepting of new people. Listen and learn as there are experts within the industry who have countless decades of knowledge and experience. They are typically happy to help bring you along.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO IN THE FUTURE WITH AMERISTAR?

Keith: Continually serving the customer which ultimately leads to company growth. The most motivating thing to me is watching individuals grow both personally and professionally. This can be internal as well as customers. Helping our customers succeed is vital. When they succeed, we succeed.

Clay: I look forward to the future growth of Ameristar, Jerith and B & B as well as the professional development of our team members as they continue to build their personal careers.



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Weight: 42 lbs (depends on the configuration) Hp: 1.8 (2-stroke) 1.4 (4-stroke) @ 6000 RPM

Fuel: Regular gasoline

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Impact Rate: 1100-1800 BPM

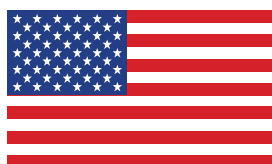
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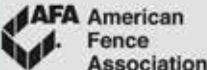
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LANGFORD FENCE ANNOUNCES ADDITION OF THIRD GENERATION

Langford Fence announces the addition of Fielding M. Langford, the third generation to join the organization. Fielding became the director of field operations in April of 2020.

The 67-year-old family-owned business is located in McEwen, Tennessee. They focus on the sale of residential and commercial fencing and railing and are the exclusive producer of the LangFence, a full round post and rail fence system in both doveled and scarfed styles.

"After our best sales year ever, we are very proud to have Fielding join us to continue to grow the business," says Vickie Langford, president.

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AMERICAN FENCE ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES 2021 PRO AWARD WINNERS

Formed in 2018, the PRO Awards recognize American Fence Association members who installed outstanding fence projects in the past year. In both Commercial and Residential, there are eight different categories including Access Control, Chain Link, Deck and Rail, Farm/Ranch/Agriculture, Ornamental, Wood, Vinyl, and Multi-Use, which combined two or more of the categories.

COMMERCIAL WINNERS



ACCESS CONTROL SECURETECH FENCE SYSTEMS

Project: Triple Tandem Automated Slide Gates

San Jose, California

Three-stage double tandem automated sliding gates to cover 180-feet of driveway for a high profile tech customer demanding greater security for their facility. It was a collaboration between many industry brands and manufacturers: Controlled Products, Capitol Steel, Econ Electronics, All-O-Matic, DKS DoorKing, Wallace Perimeter Security. The project also consisted of 2000LF of Wallace Rampart security wire mesh non-climb fencing, multiple automated driveway swing gates with directional entry/exit lanes, multiple matching pedestrian doors all with electric door hardware and access control for all gates and doors.



DECK AND RAILING SOUTHWEST FENCE & DECK

Project: Toyota Headquarters

Plano, Texas

9,600 square feet of custom composite deck. All substructure to be 2x4 treated pine 12" on centers to be set in top of concrete slab with aluminum brackets to be attached to boards and concrete. Two bridges to go over the Riverwalk, all deck board to be attached with screws and plugs to hide the screws.



ORNAMENTAL QUALITY GATES AND OPENERS

Project: 393 North

Santa Rosa Beach, Florida

Bi-parting swing gates (2) 6' tall with 1" pickets, water jetted apartment logo, powder coated black, island fencing, access control.



VINYL FOREVER FENCE & RAIL

Project: Condo Fence

Parma, Ohio

Removed old 4' shadowbox fence and replaced each unit with a closed top picket fence.



WOOD SECURETECH FENCE SYSTEMS

Project: Bridge Development

Milpitas, California

This is a new construction housing a 400,000 square feet warehouse. A fence for two outdoor break areas was built utilizing both steel and beautiful Accoya wood that matches the building's cladding. The result is an amalgam of beautiful clean lines, steel powder coated in black accentuating the elegance of the Accoya wood.

SEE RESIDENTIAL WINNERS ON P48



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RESIDENTIAL WINNERS



ACCESS CONTROL WESTLAKE DREAM GATES

Project: Modern Custom Designed Pedestrian Gate
Simi Valley, California

Custom designed pedestrian gate with two additional panels to the left and right of the gate matching the design of the gate. The project included cutting the existing walls horizontally to accommodate the panels. All materials are finished with a charcoal powder coating.



CHAIN LINK SOUTHWEST FENCE & DECK

Project: Tomas
Dallas, Texas

140 linear feet of 10' tall tennis court with one access gate, half of the fence to custom cut to accommodate different elevations starting at 10' tall and cut to 7'4" to shorter part all in black vinyl chain link and black post with triple rails.



DECK & RAILING SOUTHWEST FENCE & DECK

Project: Carrol
Allen, Texas

Custom 3-story composite deck, all water-tight with special support 8x12x40x3/8 thick metal beam to hold weight of third story deck, hidden metal joist, composite deck with modified membrane roof, finish out from underneath with can lights, fan, grill/bar station. TV and first and second level have stainless steel cable railings and third level has custom iron railing with 1/2 post attach to the side with 1/2 horizontal bars 4" on center, all metal was primed and painted black. Removed windows and added a French door on third level to access deck.



FARM & RANCH SOUTHWEST FENCE & DECK

Project: Flower Mound
Flower Mound, Texas

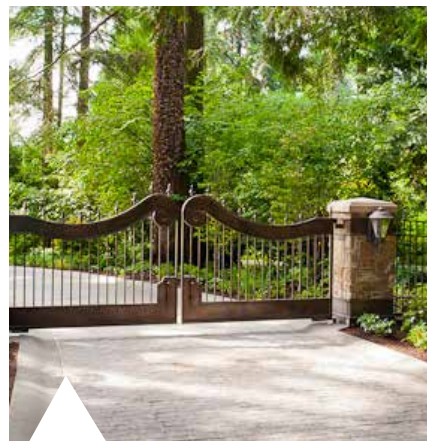
600 linear feet of corral cedar fence with 6x6 post set 8' on centers triple 2x6 horizontal boards, custom double swing electric wrought-iron gates with 6" post. LA500 operators and triple loops, 180 linear feet of custom railing on top of stone retaining wall. All holes for post to be core drill, 2" post, 1/2 x 2" flat bars horizontal approximately 4" on centers and primed and painted bronze color, specialty dog run with concrete moss strip, synthetic turf and 6' black chain link, recess fire pit with composite deck benches.



MULTI-USE QUALITY GATES AND OPENERS

Project: Flower Beach Access Gates
Panama City Beach, Florida

Custom aluminum beach access pedestrian gates with flower design, powder coated oil rubbed bronze. The small 4' flower pedestrian gate has self-closing hinges with a gravity latch. The larger 6' flower pedestrian gate has a locinox tiger hinge, recessed 1200 lb. weather-proof maglock, essex keypad, and request to exit button. This installation allows a private beach home access control on their boardwalk.



ORNAMENTAL AUTOMATED GATES AND EQUIPMENT

Project: Hunts Point
Hunts Point, Washington

Custom vehicle and pedestrian gate with pillar bands and patina.



WOOD ARUBA IRONWORKS

Project: Templeton
Parker, Texas

Approximately 2,000 linear feet of custom iron fence, 6' tall with solid square bars, and triple channel every so often. A custom-entry arch gates with cedar wood, 2 liftmaster operators, to be connected to the house with a CAPXL call box, KP2000 key pad inside, loops, optex loops. The other two double-swing entry gates to match fence with LA 500 operators CAPXL access controls, loops, KP2000 on the inside, all access controls connect to mother board inside.

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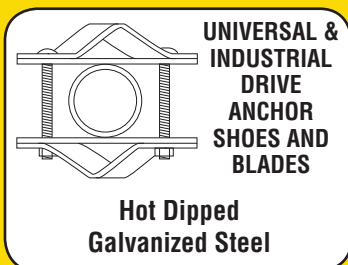
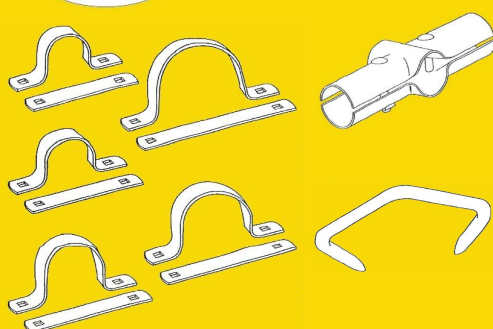
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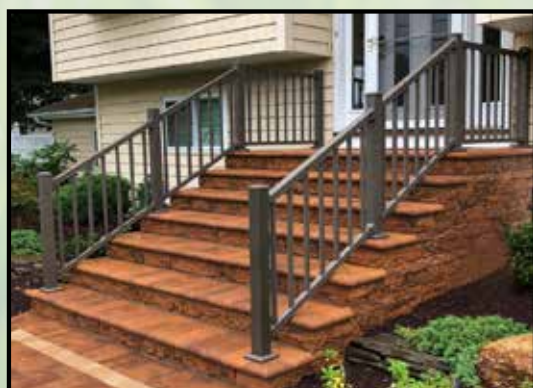
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CASE STUDY

Revamping Employee and Sales Training in Light of COVID

The onslaught of COVID in early 2020 had every business scrambling to figure out how to continue providing services under ever-evolving restrictions. Ameristar's training program is one example.

Rachel Newton, corporate trainer with Ameristar, says they had to figure out a way to provide training remotely and it was a massive undertaking. Headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Ameristar is the world's largest manufacturer of ornamental fence and gates. Providing training in person was done by flying customers to the facility in Tulsa, teaching them about the products, taking a plant tour which is over a million square feet, bringing in lunch, having dinner with the sales team, and driving everyone around in a 15-passenger van. All of this would need to be revamped in light of COVID.

"We taught around 10 classes a year with 15 – 25 customers per class. It was great! I absolutely loved it," Newton says. "In 2020, I attended FenceTech in Utah and had the best time. I remember the last day of the show, COVID was starting to get real."

The Information Technology department of Ameristar got everyone set up with everything needed to work from home. "This was over 100 people within a week or two, it was impressive!" says Newton. "With everyone working from home, we saw this as a great opportunity to offer refresher classes to our sales team. We went over products and different fence systems. We decided to offer classes for our customers, too."

Transforming current, in-person trainings to Zoom-friendly engaging presentations was a huge undertaking. "We had to change the way we taught," Newton explains. "The room full of eager faces, laughing at jokes, and engaging in conversation was just a memory. With participants on the other side of the screen quietly following along, we had to draw on the excitement and engaging energy from within. After a season of trial and error, we found our flow and learned new ways to keep the audience engaged."

After months of quarantine, staff began to return to the office. Newton, along with Chris Rice also a corporate trainer, continued the Virtual Training Classes for customers and the Ameristar sales team, including all of the Sales and Service Center Branch Managers. Today, we continue to expand, develop and update the virtual trainings, making sure we provide the

most accurate and essential information to maximize the education and engagement of our internal and external customers.

"One of the benefits of the Virtual Product Training classes is we are able to reach a much broader audience; not limiting participation to only those who can fly into Tulsa for a day and a half," Newton says. "We have even had contractors log into training classes from their phones while sitting in their truck at a jobsite. Hundreds of customers across the US and Canada have attended our nine virtual product training session, and we continue to assess our current curriculum, adding sessions as needed."

The classes are 60 – 90 minutes long, highlighting a different product line each week. After each class, customers take a short test and a survey. Ameristar then sends out certificates of completion and Ameristar memorabilia for those who complete the tests. If customers are a member of the American Fence Association and need credit hours, the classes go toward their accreditation.

"One of our favorite parts of in-person sales training was the plant tour. With COVID, we weren't able to continue those, so we sought ways to stay connected to our customers and employees," Newton says. "We started making fun content for our social media channels, filming behind the scenes videos, product overviews, standard operating processes, highlighting departments within the



organization, as well as special announcements."

"Our virtual trainings have been a huge success, and the last few years have taught us the benefits, fun and excitement that can come from embracing change," she says. "These trainings could not have been a success without our incredible sales team, IT, marketing and of course, our customers! We hope to get back to in-person training soon, however, we also believe the virtual world of training and on-boarding is here to stay. As we continue to sharpen ourselves and our class offerings, we look forward to what the future throws at us next!"



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TONY THORNTON ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF THORNTON FENCE CONSULTING GROUP 2022



Tony Thornton

Tony Thornton, CFP, CAGOI, CAGSD, a 45-plus years veteran of the fencing industry with a depth of experience as a contractor, supplier/distributor and in manufacturing, is now at the helm of a new company, Thornton Fence Consulting Group (TFC Group).

"It's a very exciting time for me, professionally and personally. I feel like my whole career has been leading to this," says Thornton. "I've owned my own company and worked for other organizations throughout my career, gaining experience in sales, operations, installation, and project management. Along the way, I began developing efficiency methods that streamlined processes,

which led to increased profitability. My goal with TFC Group is to share this knowledge."

Thornton began his career in the fence industry at age 15 when a neighbor and family friend stopped by while he was cutting his lawn and told him, "Get in the truck. I talked to your dad and we're going to build a fence." That family friend and neighbor was Jere Jefcoat and every summer after that, Thornton worked for Jefcoat Fence Company in Pearl, Mississippi, until he joined the company full time after deciding college wasn't the right fit for him.

"It was at Jefcoat that the foundation for my love of this industry was formed. I learned all aspects of the fence industry – residential and commercial, different types of fencing materials, gate automation, access control and more," says Thornton. "As I learned, I developed a passion for finding ways to improve how we did things, the processes we used." After 14 years, nine of those as the operations manager, Thornton left Jeffcoat to branch out on his own.

At the age of 29, Thornton started his first business, which specialized in gate automation installation. This company grew exponentially and became one of the largest

Continued on p61



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Family Business: How to Bring in the Younger Generation

Tom Luby, *Business Consultant
and Fence Industry Spokesperson*

BRINGING A FAMILY MEMBER INTO THE FAMILY BUSINESS SHOULD BE DONE ONLY AFTER CAREFUL THOUGHT. IN MANY CASES, FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES MIX VERY WELL. FOR THE NEXT GENERATION, THE YEARS OF EXPOSURE OF THE BUSINESS CAN BE INSTRUMENTAL IN ESTABLISHING A VAST KNOWLEDGE BASE, AND LOYALTY TO THE FAMILY BUSINESS IS ANOTHER BENEFIT.



Hopefully, you read my column in the March issue of *Fence News* about planning for the transition of including family members in the business. Now, let's look at things to consider when transferring ownership within the family.

Deal objectively with the relative's qualifications. We forget that relatives will bring to the job additional experience and all they may need is training into the specific industry or business. Talk in advance about how they will train. Will they start at the bottom and learn every aspect of the business? Will they rely on others for training? Will they start at the top? In the end, the answer could turn out to be a combination of all methods. It's best to get a plan together and communicate it clearly; this can help eliminate wasted effort and bruised feelings.

A relative (especially one just out of school) should acquire practice experience elsewhere. This allows a family member to grow and mature away from home and will give him or her a

different perspective on how a company is best organized and managed.

Clearly define responsibilities. Many are reluctant to share their position and power in the company. Thus, some jobs are loosely defined and the individual begins to create his own job function and title, but this never allows the individual to be fully confident about his authority or be sure he or she is doing the job the right way.

Divide responsibilities. To avoid power struggles, it's a good idea to assign each family member a job that they do best. Sit down together, in private, and divide up your roles according to the wants and proper functions. You could make it an office retreat and get away for an afternoon or a day,

away from interruptions. Each will, at times and especially during the division, fight for their own bit of turf, and this can cause the functions to overlap. Keep the functions separate.

Establish working hours in advance. Are you supposed to work 9 – 5? Are you supposed to be the first to arrive and the last to leave? Are there busy seasons with extended hours? How much travel does the job entail? Those who build a business work long, hard hours and feel this kind of dedication is necessary for success. However, the relative may be a well-organized, no-nonsense manager who believes in hard work but also likes to devote time to family and has outside interests. Those going into a family firm must be prepared

to work harder, longer hours in the first five years than they have ever worked in their lives.

Figure out who reports to whom. This might include some discussion of the attitude of some employees who have been with the company for some time. Discuss with the relative how you will be introduced to these employees and in what way you will be working with them. Because of a vague role, many veteran employees feel threatened by a relative's presence, until they grow to trust and respect him or her.

Plan office space and equipment carefully. The proximity of the offices can be important, and allows them to be privy to important meetings, phone conversations and various business transactions from which they might have been excluded.

Introduce the relative to key outside people. Depending on the position, and especially if it is an heir apparent, introduce him or her to outside contacts as this will help build their credibility. These key people include vendors, of course, but also the team of experts helping your business move forward, such as the banker, accountant, insurance agent and attorney.

Discuss salary and perks in advance. When negotiating salaries, it is vital to talk about raises and bonuses, expenses, and amenities such as cars, insurance, and vacation times. Some family businesses don't believe in taking vacation unless they are business related. Others might think that vacations are an important time to get away from business to clear the mind.

A relative should be free to do things their own way. Relatives cannot be intimidated by what others might think. Delegate to them the proper responsibility and authority to accomplish the work, step back and monitor their work.

Define the roles of other family members in the business. It is important to discuss the possibility of other relatives coming into the business in the future. The ownership can be concentrated in one or a very few able successors, and the rest of the family can divide the responsibilities into mutually exclusive territories or functions.

Work together on estate planning. A relative should be appraised of all legal estate planning and should be included in any meetings that relate to this.

A relative must begin to learn on his own. Any effective manager has to go further than in-house training. They should be prepared to take courses and attend seminars to improve business management skills, especially as technology changes. This will help prevent some of the same family business errors of the past and avail yourselves of new methods of doing business.

After a year or so, arrange a vacation for the boss. It's important for the senior family member to see that the business won't fall apart or go bankrupt without him or her around. This is usually the hardest rule to deal with. Urge them to take an extended vacation and relax for a time.

Establish a family council. This is an excellent way to communicate and to air any problems or differences that might otherwise be overlooked or ignored if they had to be discussed during the business week. Time is on the side of the younger generation, if they can wait long enough to get to do what they want. But, it's not worth the years of aggravation to reach this point, when problems may be worked out in advance. In the long run, and most importantly, suppliers feel safe with the family firm because they are solid, family-owned and family-operated.

Fight issues, not emotions. This is the most important rule you will learn. Confrontations will happen almost daily if you let them start. Most fight over people hired, or terminated, and money being spent. Discuss plans rationally before working on something new.

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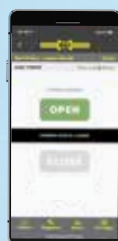
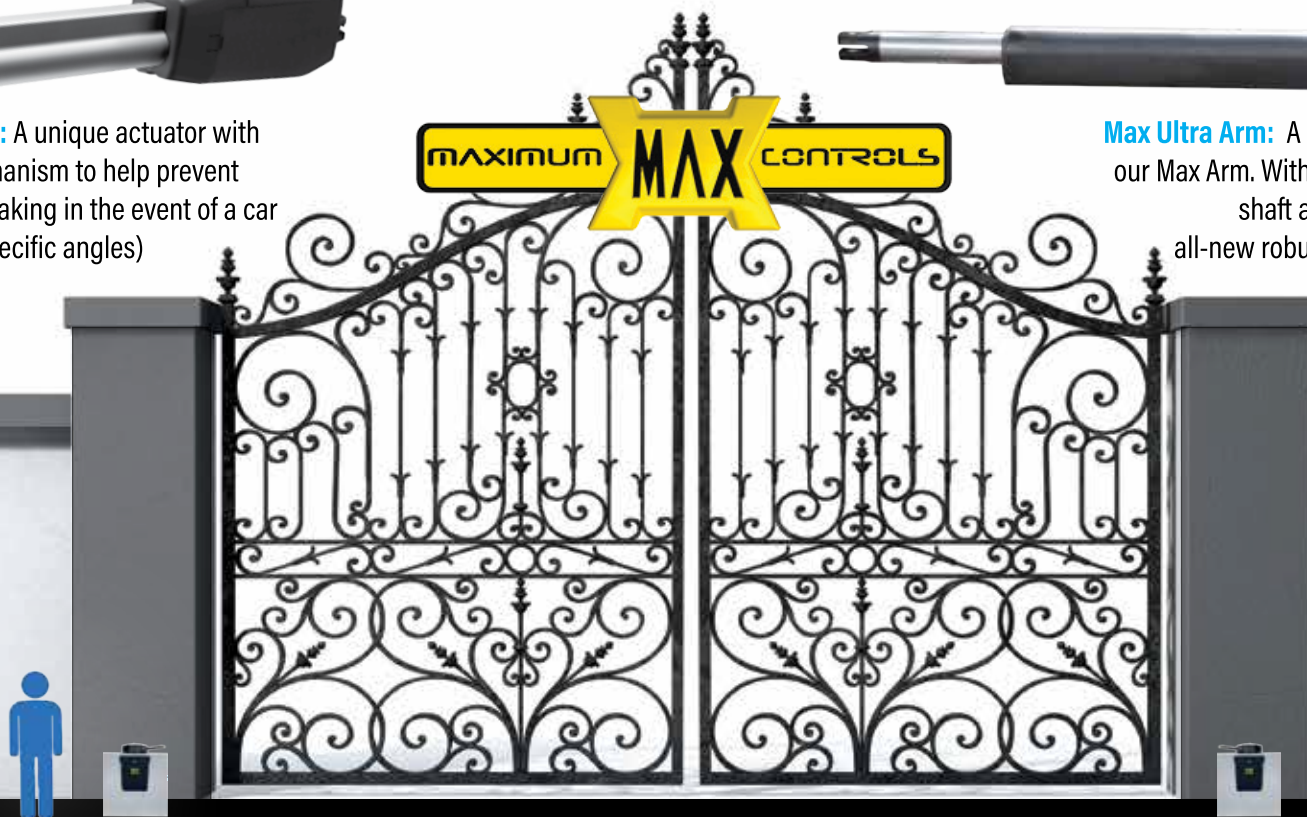
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gate operator and access control distributors in the country. "This is when my passion for training and education began, particularly as UL and ASTM standards were introduced into the fencing industry."

After selling the distribution company in the early 2000s, Thornton worked for DKS (Doorking) as a regional sales manager for over nine years. While there, he became heavily involved with the in-house and regional training events throughout the country.

For the past eight years, (2014-2022), Thornton has served as the Executive Director for the American Fence Association (AFA). "This role was a perfect fit for me," says Thornton. "We were able to grow membership while developing multiple education and training programs." He says one accomplishment he is particularly proud of was the development of the Accreditation and Certification Institute (ACI) that leads the fence and gate automation industry with several levels of certifications and accreditations as a third-party entity.

"My goal has always been to bring a new level of professionalism and relevance to the fence industry," says Thornton. "I think the professionals in our industry should be viewed as true tradesman, just like professionals in the electrical and plumbing industries are. There's no reason why, as tradesman, we have to be looked upon as the last contractor on the job. I will continue to work tirelessly to encourage professionalism, certifications and accreditations across our industry, as well as promoting the fence trade to architects, engineers and project management groups."

In his role at AFA, Thornton also had the opportunity to speak, mentor, support and coach many companies that needed help to successfully grow their business. "As I spoke with hundreds of fence company leaders annually, a common theme developed – everyone was struggling with the same problems with no clearly defined solutions for solving them. I served as a mentor to many of those companies, and it was that positive experience that led to my decision to form a consulting group."

Thornton says he has brought together a team of experienced fence industry professionals from multiple areas of expertise to provide a comprehensive range of consulting services. "Our goal at TFC Group is, quite simply, to help businesses in this fencing industry achieve their goals. That will look different for different companies, but our mission is to work with each to bring maximum profitability to their organization."

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CONTROLLED PRODUCTS SYSTEMS GROUP ANNOUNCES SITTMAN AS PRESIDENT



operations, he managed the nationwide operations for CPSG including branch operations and supply chain across the company's 35 branches.

Controlled Products Systems Group (CPSG), a leading nationwide distributor of perimeter access control products, announces Ken Sittman has been promoted to president. He replaces Brendan Lyons, who has taken on an opportunity outside CPSG.

Sittman has served in numerous leadership roles during his more than 15-year career with CPSG. In his most recent role as director of

He joined CPSG in 2007 as assistant branch manager and has held several positions within the company.

"It has been a tremendous honor to serve as president of CPSG over the last several years," says Lyons. "I am incredibly proud of everything our team and company has been able to accomplish. Ken has proven to be a phenomenal industry leader and is absolutely the right person to lead this organization and build on this momentum. I am confident that he will be a driving force in growing the business while delivery the very best products and services to CPSG's customers."

Sittman holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Cal State San Marcos and an MBA from University of Maryland-Global Campus.

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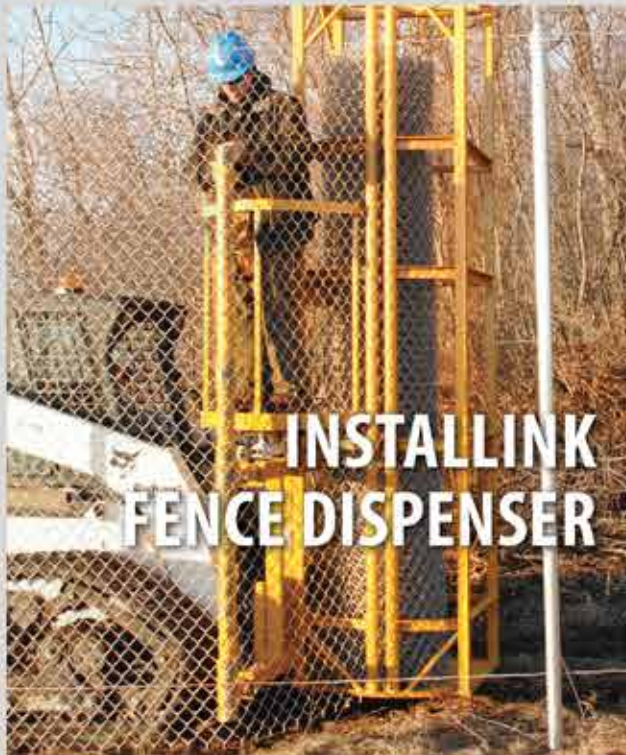
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BOARD AND OFFICERS ANNOUNCED FOR CHAIN LINK MANUFACTURERS INSTITUTE

Barry Marrs, chief executive officer of Security Contractors Services (SCS) in North Highlands, California, has been named CLFMI president. SCS is one of the leading manufacturers of chain link fencing products in North America. Prior to his position at SCS, Marrs was CEO of Master Halco in La Habra, California.

Rob Kilroy, director of sales at Pexco in Athol, Massachusetts, has been named CLFMI vice president. Pexco's PDS Brand slats increase privacy, security and enhance the aesthetics of chain link fence systems. Kilroy has more than 20 years of experience in the fence industry.

CLFMI has named Bill Peterson as secretary-treasurer. Peterson is the president of Richard's Fence Company in Akron, Ohio. He is a certified fence professional and has been president of the Northern Ohio AFA. He is a voting member of ASTM and a current CLFMI board member.

The three officers are joined on the CLFMI Board of Directors by representatives from Ameristar Perimeter Security in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Master Halco in Dallas, Texas and Liberty Wire Johnstown, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

CLFMI is the leading organization of chain link fence manufacturers in the US, Canada, and Mexico.

For more information, visit www.chainlinkinfo.org.



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Is your glass always half-full?

If you answered “yes” to these questions, then chances are you’re happier, healthier and more successful than those who choose to focus on the dark clouds instead of the silver lining. Numerous research studies have found that optimists do better in most avenues of life, whether it’s school, sports career or relationships. They get depressed less often than pessimists do, make more money, and have longer, happier relationships. A study published in *Psychological Science* found those with more optimistic attitudes even had better-functioning immune systems which, in turn, helped them ward off illnesses. There’s evidence that optimists live longer, too.

If you’re a pessimist, none of this surprises you, right? After all, you always expect to get bad news. You spend your whole life identifying the negative – or potential negative – of any situation. A pessimist uses negativity as a defense mechanism, thinking if they keep their expectations low enough, they won’t be crushed when things don’t work out. But research has revealed the tendency to be a wet blanket in just about any situation – a trait called “dispositional pessimism” – doesn’t merely just keep you from enjoying life, it actually becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy in many ways, limiting your ability to be happy and successful.

Fortunately, a grim outlook doesn’t have to be permanent. Optimism and pessimism are actually two ends of a continuum, with about 80% of the population in the U.S. scattered from mildly to relentlessly optimistic. If you are entrenched on the other, pessimistic end, you can make some changes and slide to other side. It’s important to realize that positive thinking doesn’t mean keeping your head in the sand and ignoring reality or failing

to recognize unpleasant things. It just means you make a conscious decision to consistently approach unpleasantness in a more positive and productive way.

Here are some suggestions for becoming more of an optimist:

REFRAME YOUR THINKING. Researchers have learned that optimism and pessimism both boil down to little more than a person’s “explanatory” style, or how they interpret the ups and downs of life. When a good thing happens, pessimists dismiss it as a fluke; optimists take the credit. When bad things happen, pessimists blame themselves, while optimists see bad events as having little to do with them. Aim for a balance between accepting responsibility for some of the bad circumstances and taking action. When you catch yourself thinking like a pessimist, reframe the problem so it’s not all your fault.

TALK YOURSELF INTO IT. Self-talk is the endless stream of thoughts that run through your head every day. These automatic thoughts can be positive or negative. If these are mostly negative, your outlook on life is more likely pessimistic; if mostly positive, you’re likely an optimist. Think of your self-talk as your own personal pep rally. Talk yourself through any rough times and praise yourself when things are going well.

PAY ATTENTION WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD. Try to really tune in to what you’re thinking and feeling in those moments you feel good, so you can learn how to get there again. You can also try to bank those positive feelings to draw on when you’re

feeling negative. Remember how it felt to land a new client or share a fun evening with a friend. Those good memories can get you through a tough time.

CONNECT WITH OTHERS. Having meaningful interactions with others gives people a greater sense of well-being than inconsequential small talk, according to a study from the University of Arizona. There may not be time each day to have deep philosophical conversations but reaching out to a close friend or spouse to talk about things that matter to you can go a long way towards fostering optimism.

CHANGE YOUR FOCUS. Find quick distractions you can use when you realize you’re stuck on the same negative thought (ruminating). Try activities that demand your full attention to get unstuck. Ruminating is just one road to pessimism. Another is catastrophizing, or mentally rewriting grim possibilities until they become doomsday scripts. A simple cough turns into lung cancer. A missed deadline leads to unemployment. It’s hard to think positively when you are so intently focused on creating worst-case scenarios.

The benefits of becoming more optimistic are well worth the effort. By recognizing negativity and practicing positive thinking, you’ll not only be better able to cope with the stress of life’s challenges, but also more prepared to lead a healthy and happy life.



by Mark Levin, CAE, CSP

Executive Vice President, Chain Link Fence Manufacturers Institute
2022 Inductee, American Fence Association Hall of Fame

Partner is a Powerful Word

As some of you may know, I had the honor of being inducted into the American Fence Association Hall of Fame in February at FenceTech 2022 in New Orleans. This came as a great surprise to me, especially when you consider that I'm not actually a member of AFA.



Zach Eichenberger, AFA representative, presents award to Mark Levin.

However, the inscription on the beautiful award tray noted that my selection was for "advancing the principles of AFA". According to the AFA website, those principles include, "benefitting fence industry professionals and consumers by promoting the highest levels of professionalism."

It's no coincidence that the principles of the Chain Link Fence Manufacturers Institute, the group for which I have served as executive vice president for more than 30 years, are almost the same. CLFMI's bylaws proclaim that its principles include "to contribute to the privacy and security needs of the population and to enhance the welfare of the industry."

Both organizations emphasize service to the public/consumers, as well to advancing the industry. Again, this is no surprise because these two groups have been partners in strengthening the fence industry since their creation over 60

years ago: CLFMI in 1960 and AFA in 1962. Over that time, we have been aligned in our individual and collective efforts to gain recognition for the impact the fence industry has on the quality of life and the economic well-being of people and businesses across North America.

FenceTech 2022 also signaled a somewhat hopeful return to normalcy in the fence industry. The atmosphere, the energy, the attendance, and the exhibit hall in New Orleans all seemed a lot like many of the pre-Covid FenceTechs. And, while this was a refreshing reminder of the positive events in the industry's past, it also told us that the future will be different. We can't look back wistfully and try to re-create the good old days. We need to take the best of what we had and make it better, and we need to quickly start adding new and innovative things to our businesses, our organizations, and our industry events.

Here are some of the ways AFA and CLFMI can work together to advance the principles of both organizations:

Co-Branding

We need to find even more ways to support the ongoing challenge of creating the image we want for the fence industry. This image must be communicated on a higher, more consistent level than ever before. We don't want fencing and perimeter security to be an afterthought for architects, engineers, specifiers, governmental contracting agencies, and private clients anymore. We want it to be an integral part of their upfront planning and concern. Consistency of messaging is critical to making that happen.

Direct-To-Consumer Marketing

We can't rely on our desired messaging being delivered through third-party referrals and pass-along information. We need to bypass the "gatekeepers" of our branding strategies and stop waiting for our end user customers to "discover" the value we add to thousands of projects every day. Let's create a coordinated plan to get them looking for us, instead of us looking for them.

Working Together to Advance Innovation in the Industry

New ideas should always be welcome in the fence industry, even though not all of them pan out the way we thought they would. We really need to push for innovation and product advancement, not falling back on the "tried and true" to protect market shares and bottom lines. We have an incredible amount of brainpower, creativity, and experience in our industry. We need to find more ways to encourage and challenge our best people to stay in the industry and help change it for the better, and we need to reward these people for their efforts in helping us move forward.

Sixty years of partnership between CLFMI and AFA were on display in New Orleans. Chain link-related exhibits dominated the show floor. Chain link products, people, and projects were highlighted throughout the various presentations and awards programs. Being inducted into the AFA Hall of Fame was, for me, just one more symbol of what a great partnership we have had, and will continue to have.



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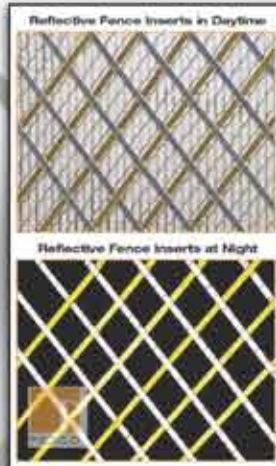
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IDEA Launches Newest Self-Study Certification Program for Gate Systems

IDEA introduces its newest self-study certification program: Automated Gate Systems Technician Level 1. This certification program builds on the Automated Gate Operator Installer course and goes into more depth on troubleshooting gate systems. Topics include troubleshooting electrical circuits, system troubleshooting methodology, basic control training, vehicle detection systems, licensing requirements, and more.

IDEA created the Automated Gate Operator Installer Certification in 2008 and the Automated Gate Systems Designer Certification in 2013. These self-study certification programs have been the industry's leading programs since their inception. IDEA has issued over 4,500 certifications across the door, gate and access control industry.

Automated Gate Systems Technician Level 2 and Automated Gate Systems Technician Level 3 programs are currently in the development process. Once an individual completes the Level 3 program, they will be awarded an Automated Gate Systems Master Technician certification.

Testing for IDEA certified programs is easy with several options to choose from. IDEA staff will travel to a location or event if there are at least 10 applicants testing. IDEA has proctors available across the country if there are less than 10 applicants. Testing can also be accomplished at a certified testing center. Instructions for use of a certified testing center can be provided by calling IDEA at (937) 698-1027 or emailing Michelle at

idea-michelle@doorededucation.com.

IDEA's gate programs will continue to provide new certifications as well as maintaining the required continuing education data for the three-year renewal cycles.

The new certification program is available on IDEA's website, www.doorededucation.com, under the certification section.

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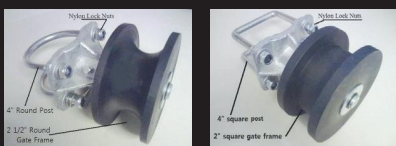


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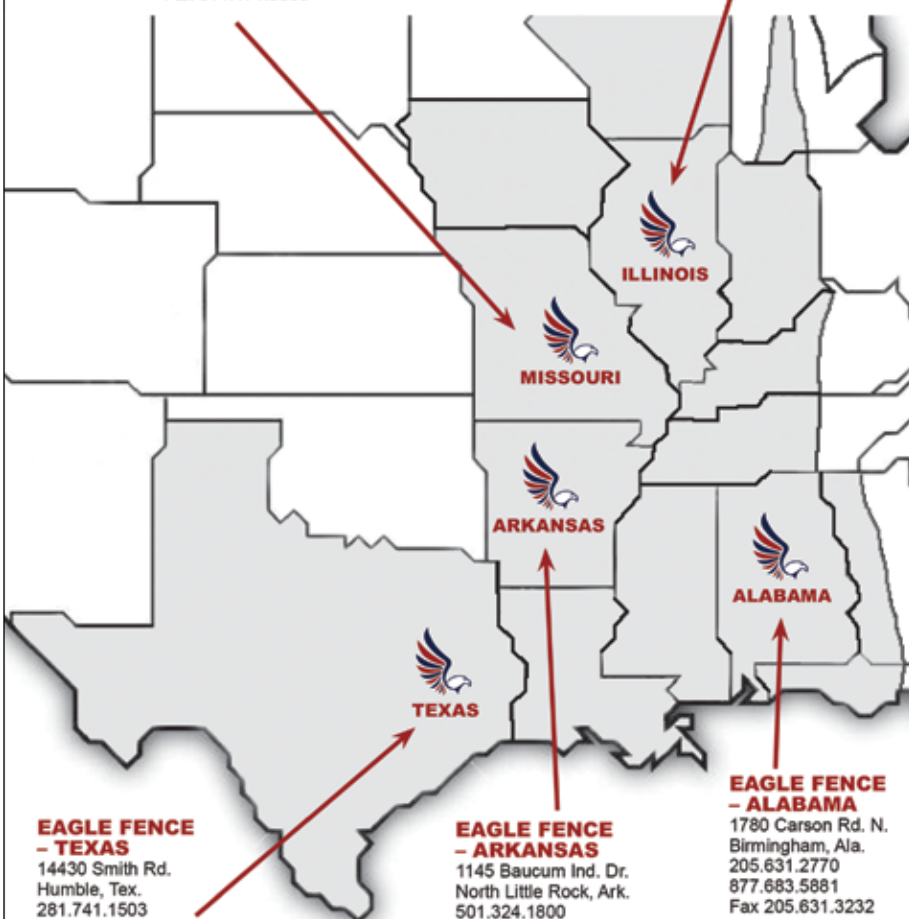
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FENCE TRAINING SCHOOL:

The North American Fence Contractor Association (NAFCA) held its annual Fence Training school in Sebring, Florida, for the ninth time February 6 – 9, 2022. Thirteen students from eight different states attended.

Prior to the school kickoff, NAFCA held its Spring Board meeting; it's the first time the board of directors were able to meet in person in two years.

"One of the benefits of the NAFCA fence training school is all projects are real world applications of the various fence projects," explains Clint Iams, NAFCA executive director. "The students, alongside seasoned veteran installers, install fence that will actually be put to use. There are no half measures or temporary fences; all are permanent installs. This provides the best possible learning experience for our students."

Each year, the classes are held at the Sebring Municipal Golf Course in Florida.

This year, the chain link class installed two 10' sections of 6' tall chain link with top rail, mid rail and bottom tension wire. Additionally, the teams installed drive anchors on the driven gate posts. Welding was taught in the golf course's shop. While no new gates were needed around the facility, each student was able to gain hands on experience with stick welding.

The ornamental aluminum instructor lead an install project of new aluminum fence donated by Alumi-Guard along the Caddyshack parking lot.

The wood fence class constructed a cedar picket fence along the golf cart parking garages. The cedar pickets were donated by Qual Line Fence.

The farm and ranch fence class installed 600' of coated high tensile fence for the golf course along the edge of a small creek to keep golf carts from ending up in the water; the material was donated by John Wall, Inc., and American Timber.



Employees from Bellbrook Fence and Mr Fence learn to trouble shoot gate openers in Access Controls.

2022

The PVC class installed 50' of privacy fence around the maintenance garage at the center of the golf course; all material was provided by Bufftech. Additionally, they discussed proper cleaning techniques, repaired a number of sections, and installed PVC on a slope.

The access control/gate operator class upgraded the gate/operators with new/upgraded safety features, provided by LiftMaster, and did trouble shooting of all the existing units.

Continued on p70



Ray Statz of Qual Line Fence oversees students from Bellbrook Fence and Veteran's Fence and Supply install this cedar picket fence.



Glenn Butterfield leads students from Bellbrook Fencing, C&C Fence, and Decatur Fence in the PVC class.

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Instructors also demonstrated building a guard rail along one of the golf cart bridges on the course with material donated by Log Cabin Fence and Qual Line Fence.

In addition to the hands-on experiences and in-the-field training, various safety discussions were held at mealtime and in the evenings.

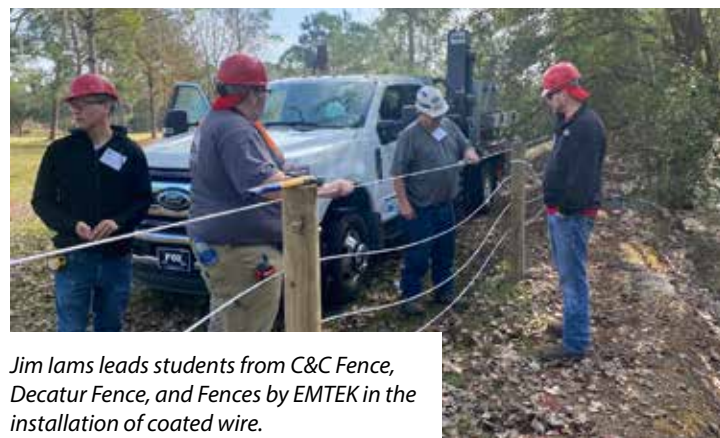
"The first night, one of our access control instructors reviewed gate operator safety regulations," says Iams. "The second night, four of our instructors led a round table discussion and Q&A session. While these were optional classes, all students attended both events."

The school concluded on the third day with a graduation ceremony. A few city officials attended the ceremony. "They are grateful for the service we provide the community of Sebring," says Iams. "This is the ninth year NAFA has held its fence training school in Sebring at the municipal golf course. Each year, there have been approximately \$25,000 worth of material donated and installed by the classes, totaling \$225,000 worth of material donated to the City of Sebring over the nine years."

NAFA runs the school at cost in order to keep the registration fee as low as possible. The instructors volunteer their time and services for the betterment of the fence industry. The instructors have a collective cumulative experience in the fence industry of over 450 years and over 220 years of teaching experience.

"We thank all of the participating companies for their donation of time and material to make the school possible," says Iams.

To see the full listing of supporters, visit www.4nafca.com.



Jim Iams leads students from C&C Fence, Decatur Fence, and Fences by EMTEK in the installation of coated wire.



Instructors Don Roche and Ray Statz look on as employees from Bellbrook Fence, Decatur Fence, Hip Square Fence, and Veteran's Fence and Supply install this short section of chain link.

Students from C&C Fence, Cruz Property Maintenance, and Qual Line Fence work alongside instructor Shawn King.

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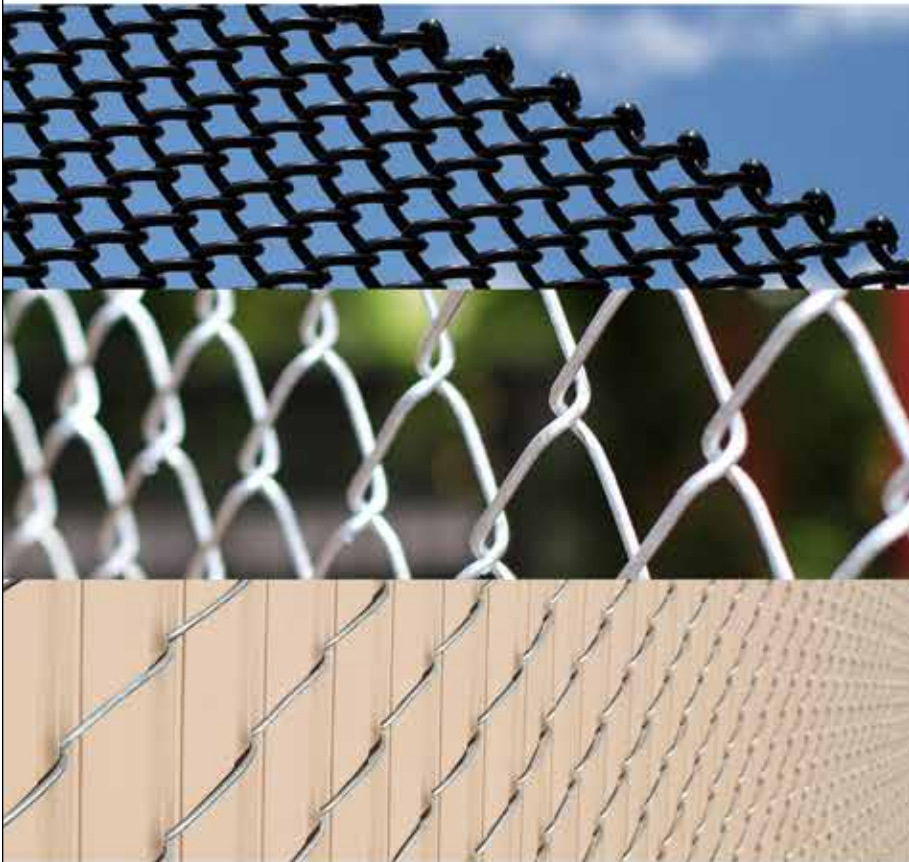
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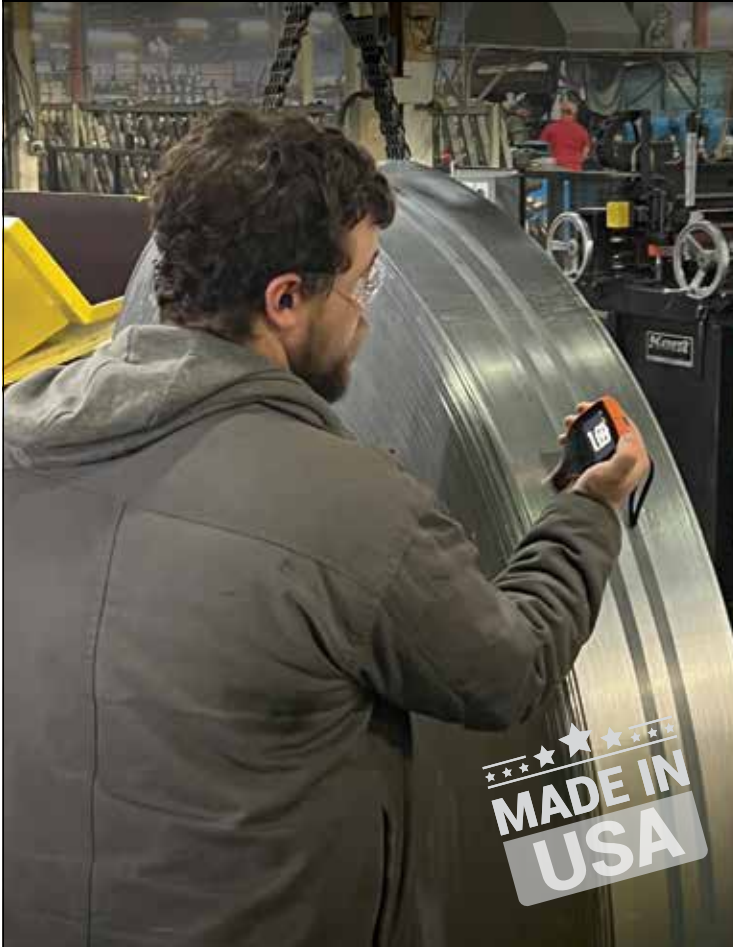
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Charleston, South Carolina

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For more information, visit www.americanfenceassociation.com.

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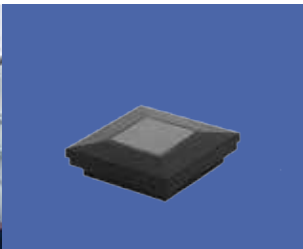


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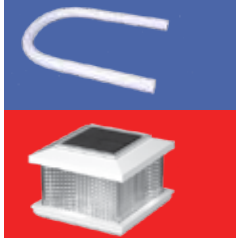
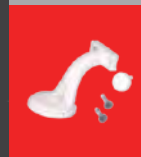
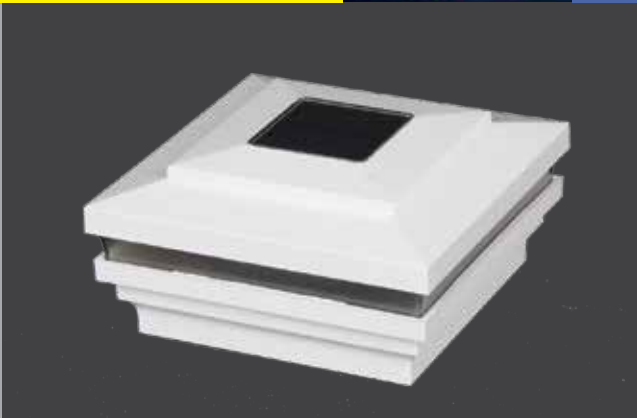
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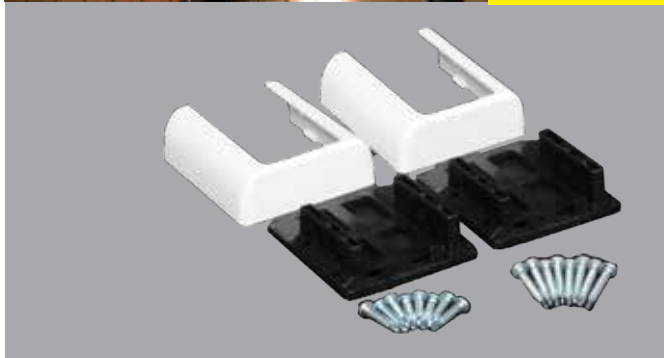
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